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A

# REVIEW

OF

DOCT. EMMONS'S THEORY

OF

## GOD'S AGENCY ON MANKIND :

ADDRESSED TO THE

CONGREGATIONAL CLERGY OF NEW ENGLAND.

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ALSO,

### A REFUTATION

OF

### THE VIEWS

ENTERTAINED BY ADVOCATES OF THAT THEORY,

RESPECTING

### The Necessity

OF

### THE MORAL EVIL EXISTING IN THE UNIVERSE

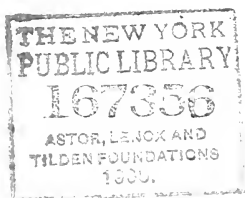
TO A DISPLAY OF THE DIVINE GLORY.



NEW-YORK :

PUBLISHED BY JOHN SAYRE, 146 BROADWAY.

.....  
1821.



*Southern District of New-York, ss.*

**B**E IT REMEMBERED, That on the twenty-sixth day of September, in the forty-sixth year of the Independence of the United States of America, JOHN SAYRE, of the said District, hath deposited in this office the title of a book, the right whereof he claims as proprietor, in the words following, to wit:

“A Review of Doct. Emmons's Theory of God's Agency on Mankind; Addressed to the Congregational Clergy of New-England. Also, a Refutation of the Views entertained by Advocates of that Theory, respecting the Necessity of the Moral Evil existing in the Universe to a display of the Divine Glory.”

In conformity to the Act of the Congress of the United States, entitled “An Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the Copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the time therein mentioned” And also to an Act, entitled “an Act, supplementary to an Act, entitled an Act for the encouragement of Learning, by securing the copies of Maps, Charts, and Books, to the authors and proprietors of such copies, during the times therein mentioned, and extending the benefits thereof to the arts of designing, engraving, and etching historical and other prints.”

JAMES DILL,

*Clerk of the Southern District, of New-York.*

# INTRODUCTORY ADDRESS

TO THE

CONGREGATIONAL CLERGY OF NEW-ENGLAND.



REVEREND FRIENDS,

THE work of the Ministers of the Gospel is not confined to the limits of their parishes: they are appointed, not merely to preach Christ to the people intrusted to their care, but are also "set for the general defence of the Gospel." They, as individuals, are constituted guardians of the *public* faith, as well as Pastors of the particular churches and congregations over which they are placed. It devolves on them to "walk about Zion, to tell the towers thereof, mark well her bulwarks, and consider her palaces;" to extend a watchful eye over her general interests, to detect and arrest the intrusions of error, guard her purity, and defend her liberties.

This duty is imposed especially on the Congregational Clergy in their individual capacity. Their churches have not, like the Presbyterian and Episcopal, adopted a common Confession of Faith, as a standard of orthodoxy; nor established a common Judicatory, to which those who depart from the faith once delivered to the saints, are amenable. A large proportion of their churches are entirely independent of the others, and at liberty to embrace any system whatever of doctrine, and adopt any peculiarity of rites, without subjecting themselves to the interference of any judicatory, or the sacrifice of any immunity. Their representative assemblies have no power to enact authoritative laws respecting the faith, rites, and government of their churches; nor to pronounce authoritative decrees of excommunication, or disfranchisement.

They are not invested with executive power. Their voice is only advisory and monitory ; and their decisions must be ratified by individual churches, in order to become law.

Thence, the task of correcting abuses and repressing error devolves on the clergy individually, in their private capacity ; and the press is the chief medium of accomplishing it. Nor is this the least important duty which their office assigns them. The dignity and influence of religion depend on her purity. Error in doctrine is the worst species of irreligion ; for it attacks religion herself, and endeavours to conquer her dominions by annihilating her truth. The multitude embrace the views of Christianity which are inculcated by their teachers ; and if those views are fraught with error, it soon develops itself in practice. The consciences of men are not often more, they are ordinarily less, rigorous than their creeds.

Erroneous exhibitions of Christianity do more than any thing else to create and strengthen her enemies. Explore the origin of the rancour with which her modern opposers have persecuted her ; you will perceive it was excited, in no small degree, by the ridiculous rites, the absurd doctrines, and the intolerance and tyranny with which the folly and impiety of men had disfigured her. Search for the cause of the disrespect and prejudice with which she is viewed by many of the intelligent and influential in our country ; you will discover that they have been awakened extensively by the distorted views of her which those individuals have been called to contemplate. Robbed of her dignity and consistency by the admixture of what is contradictory, ridiculous, intolerant, and weak, they have not been inspired with that reverence toward her, her native majesty is adapted to awaken ; nor yielded her the confidence her unsullied truth is fitted to command.

Erroneous exhibitions of the Gospel encourage its enemies in their opposition. Its enemies identify the true Gospel with those pretended exhibitions of it. They regard their whole aversion to it as just, because they are justified in rejecting the errors appended to it; and when they triumph over those errors, flatter themselves that they have gained a victory over the Gospel itself. Had the Gospel never been taught but in its purity, we persuade ourselves, that Christendom had never been the scene of persecution since the primitive ages of the church; the world had never witnessed the war of modern infidelity; nor our country exhibited the deplorable spectacle of so large a portion of those who are first in intelligence, station, and influence, standing in the ranks of the indifferent, the unbelieving, and the contemptuous. The ministers of the cross, therefore, discharge one of their most sacred and momentous duties, when, in the "meekness of wisdom," they expose and arrest the deviations from truth, to which every age gives birth: and they make their happiest efforts to adorn the walls of Zion with salvation, and her gates with praise, when they labour to bring all into the "unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God."

And the clergy of New-England have not, ordinarily, been negligent to discharge this duty. Her churches have enjoyed a ministry more intelligent, more pious and vigilant, and exerting a more powerful and salutary influence, than those, during the same period, of any other section, not only of our own country, but of the world. Her first ministers possessed more of the apostolic character than modern ages have often seen. The venerable Edwardses, Bellamy, Smalley, Lathrop, the illustrious Dwight, Strong, and several others, would have added strength to any church, and honour to any na-

tion. Her clergy have done more than all Christendom beside, to advance our knowledge of those subjects in theology to which they have devoted their peculiar attention. Edwards instructed the divines and philosophers of Europe on the subject of the freedom of the will ; and many treatises have been presented by them to the world, which, for philosophical accuracy, force of argumentation, and ardour of piety, are not surpassed by the publications sent forth during the same period by any division of the Church. And no inconsiderable part of their works has been polemical, and specifically designed to counteract the errors with which the churches around them were infested. Such were some of President Edwards's, most of Bellamy's, Dr. Edward's, part of Smalley's, Dwight's, and those of others ; and more recently, the Unitarian controversy has called forth several publications from the orthodox, honourable to their authors, and worthy of the churches which they represent.

The intelligence, the vigilance, the promptitude, to meet and check the encroachments of error, for which the clergy of New-England have been distinguished, have excited the hope and expectation that the subject of this Review would, ere this, have aroused to attention, and called forth to controversy, some one of their number, more competent to its refutation, and, from a proximity to the scene of its publication, more immediately interested in it than ourselves. We know not whither to look for the cause, that so novel, and, in our apprehension, so heterodox and pernicious a doctrine, should have so long been permitted to be taught and diffused, almost without an effort to develop to the churches its character, and arrest its progress. Whether the individuals, on whom the task of opposing it would properly have devolved, have



been diverted from it by other controversies, of which that section of New-England has been the scene ; or have been withheld from it by respect for the talents and piety of its author ; whether they have been deterred from it by the hope that the truths which are intermingled, and taught in connexion with it, would intercept its dangerous tendency ; by the apprehension, that its absurdity would prove a sufficient obstacle to its prevalence and permanency ; or whether other causes, in conjunction with these, have hitherto prevented its being subjected to the ordeal of public controversy, which is usually the lot of novelties and innovations, we are at a loss to decide. That it has not arisen from the popularity of the theory we are certain. We cannot but regret, that some one has not appeared to controvert it, both that we might have been released from the task, and that the churches might have enjoyed an earlier and more able vindication of the truth.

We have deemed it our duty, however, to present to the public our views of its erroneous-ness, and to solicit to them the serious attention, especially of you, Reverend Friends, the Congregational Clergy of New-England, who are set to guard the faith of the churches, and to whom we must look for co-operation, in endeavouring to give supremacy to the truth as it is in Jesus.

We cannot but regard it as claiming your most solemn consideration. Is it safe for the church to slumber, while even the most harmless errors are diffusing their influence ? And allow us to ask, whether this theory, if our views of its erroneous-ness are correct, is not fraught with an alarming share of danger to the cause of the Redeemer ? How had it been viewed had it come from the hands of Antinomians, Unitarians, or Infidels ? Would it

not have been regarded as wearing a threatening aspect, and have awakened apprehension? May not many of its principles be employed, by the enemies of religion, most naturally and successfully, to perplex and subvert the faith of men in the truth of the Gospel? Or at least, if not thus dangerous in its tendency, is it not untrue, and to be denied a place among the acknowledged doctrines of revealed religion?

We entreat you deliberately to weigh our reasonings; and examine whether the dictates of common sense, of reason, of revelation, do not concur in forcing us to the conclusions to which we have advanced. If we have established our views, we conjure you by the responsibilities of your office, to unite with us in suppressing the error, and calling back the churches to soundness in the faith.

We have not deemed it necessary to trace the history of this theory, nor to allude to any of the publications in whose pages, to a greater or less extent, its principles may have obtained a place, besides those of Dr. Emmons; nor considered it important to designate the points in which it resembles other errors in theology and philosophy, which have obtained a currency in the world.

We have not been prompted to this work by sectional feeling, nor the love of controversy; but by a conviction of the truth of our views, and a solicitude for the welfare of the church. We trust, that those who shall patiently examine our pages, and comprehend the import of our reasonings, will discern that we have not adopted those views without consideration, nor reposed them on a foundation which shall be easily shaken.

## REVIEW, &c.



DR. EMMONS has presented to the world, in two volumes of Sermons, the first published in 1800, and the second in 1812, a Theory of God's Agency on Mankind, by which He gives existence to their agency, and controls all its events.

It is novel and peculiar, as it is a theory of the *MODE* of the divine agency.

The theories of Calvinistic theologians on this subject, as far as we possess an acquaintance with them, merely respect the *existence*, the *extent*, and the *effects* of God's agency; leaving the *mode*, at most excepting the question whether, in certain cases, it be direct or indirect, untouched. The Doctor's is a theory of the *mode*, and seems, from his use of it, to have been constructed for the purpose of solving those difficult cases in metaphysics; the consistency of a divine influence on men, with their moral agency; the fall of Adam; the depravity of his posterity;

the renovation of the heart; and the mixed character of the saints in this life; which other theories leave unexplained: and did it furnish a solution of those difficulties, and come sustained by competent evidence, it would undoubtedly constitute an important accession to our knowledge, and entitle him to the respect and gratitude of the world.

Whether such is its character or not, is worthy the consideration of all. In our judgment he has ventured into

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“A dark,  
 Illimitable ocean; without bound,  
 Without dimension; where length, breadth, and height,  
 And time and place are lost:”

where he,

---

“Meeting  
 A vast vacuity: all unawares  
 Fluttering his pinions vain, plumb down has dropt  
 Ten thousand fathom deep.”

He has presented to us a fiction of fancy, instead of a doctrine of revelation; assertions and unsound reasonings, in place of indubitable deductions from known truths; and added darkness to the subject, instead of pouring on it the light of intelligibility and consistency.

To evince this, we will present a statement of his theory, and the reasonings on which it rests; exhibit some considerations, showing those reasonings to be er-

roneous, and the theory to be false; and point out some of the consequences, which must result from its being taught as a part of revealed theology.

*The theory and the reasonings on which it rests.*

The theory is briefly expressed in the following proposition:

GOD CREATES ALL THE ACTS OF MEN.

The *mode* of His agency is that of *creating*, and it extends to *all* their *actions*.

The manner in which the Doctor contemplates its mode and extent, the use of motives, and the activity and moral freedom of men, shall be exhibited by quotations.\*

From the following passages it will be seen that he regards the *mode* of God's agency as that of *creating*.

“Since all men are dependent agents, all their motions, exercises, or actions must originate from a divine efficiency. We can no more act, than we can exist, without the constant aid and influence of the Deity.” Vol. ii. p. 31.

“The heart may be created, as well as

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\* The Doctor's volumes are not numbered; for convenience, we shall designate that published in 1800 as Vol. I. and that published in 1812 as Vol. II.

the understanding; or moral exercises, as well as natural faculties. It appears from what has been said, that the hearts of saints are created; or that their free and voluntary exercises are the production of divine power." Vol. i. p. 231.

"It is agreeable to the *nature* of virtue or true holiness to be *created*." p. 279.

"Holiness is something which has a real and positive existence, and which not only *may*, but *must* be *created*." p. 280.

"He," God, "has the power of production. He can create, or bring out of nothing into existence, whatever he pleases. As he can create a body, and create a soul, which are lower kinds of existence; so he can create virtue or true holiness, which is the highest and noblest kind of existence." p. 281.

"It is sometimes proper to ascribe men's good actions wholly to God, and sometimes equally proper to ascribe their bad actions wholly to him. We may justly conclude, that the divine agency is as much concerned in their bad, as in their good actions." Vol. ii. p. 39.

"If saints can work out their own salvation, under a positive influence of the Deity: then sinners can work out their

own destruction, under his positive influence." p. 228.

"They never do act of themselves.— They live and move and have their being in God, who constantly works in them, both to will and to do, in every instance of their conduct." p. 240.

"Men are no more capable of acting independently of God in one instance than another. If they need any kind or degree of divine agency in doing good, they need precisely the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil. This is the dictate of reason, and the Scripture says the same. It is God who worketh in men, both to will and to do, in all cases without exception. He wrought equally in the minds of those who sold, and in the minds of those who bought, Joseph. He wrought as effectually in the minds of Joseph's brethren, when they sold him, as when they repented and besought his mercy. He not only *prepared* these persons to act, but *made* them act. He not only exhibited motives of action before their minds, but *disposed* their minds to comply with the motives exhibited — But there was no possible way, in which he could *dispose* them to act right or wrong, but only by producing right or

wrong volitions in their hearts. And if he produced their bad as well as good volitions, then his agency was concerned in *precisely the same manner*, in their wrong as in their right actions." Vol. ii. p. 40.

"If God can work in moral agents both to will and to do of his good pleasure, then we may easily account for the moral depravity of infants." Vol. i. p. 235.

"He works in them, as he does in other men, both to will and to do of his good pleasure; or produces those moral exercises in their hearts, in which moral depravity properly and essentially consists." p. 238.

"Their" [sinners'] "activity in all cases is owing to a divine operation upon their minds: they are not sufficient of themselves to think any thing of themselves." Vol. ii. p. 179.

"If they" [men] "do any thing whatever, it may be truly said, it was done by the finger of God." p. 32.

Many other passages of similar import might be added from the Doctor's volumes; but from these it is seen with sufficient clearness, that he regards the mode of the divine agency as that of creating. In the passages from vol. i. pp. 231, 279, 280, and 281, he represents the agency



of God, in regard to the holy acts of men, as a *creating* agency; and in the passage from vol. ii. p. 43, he represents precisely the same kind and degree of divine agency as necessary to men in doing evil, as in doing good: and God's agency as concerned in *precisely the same manner* in their wrong as in their right actions; of course it is a *creating* agency. From his using the noun "production," in several of those passages, interchangeably with "creation;" and in many other passages, the verb "produce," interchangeably with "create," it is apparent that he employs them in those places to denote the same kind of agency.

And we must infer, that he intends likewise to designate a creating agency, by the terms, "divine efficiency," "divine operation," "divine agency," "positive influence;" and the phrases, "to work in men to will and to do"—"*made* them act"—"*disposed* their minds." and others of similar import, if he wishes by them to denote any mode of God's agency. As this phraseology itself, if you except the first term, does not determine what mode of agency it is employed to designate; it must be interpreted in accordance with those passages, in which the Doctor exhi-

bits the mode of divine agency, as that of creating.

He cannot consistently employ it to denote any other mode, nor mean by it any thing *less*, than that God creates the acts of men.

He cannot mean by it, that God merely brings men into a *state*, in which they are *disposed* to act, or to act in a given way; leaving them to exert their volitions by their own power, instead of His creating those volitions; for he denies that any *disposition* can exist in the mind, which is distinct from and the cause of volition.

“Some,” says he, “suppose that a good heart essentially consists in a good principle, taste, or relish, which is totally independent of the will. But this sentiment is totally repugnant to the law of love. This law requires no dormant, inactive, torpid disposition, inclination, or taste. There can be no such thing as an holy principle, disposition, or inclination, which is distinct from true love.” “Some suppose that a bad heart consists in a bad principle, disposition, or inclination, which is entirely distinct from sinful, voluntary exercises. But it appears that all sinfulness consists in the various exercises

and modifications of self-love." Vol. i. pp. 265, 266, and 267.

"Moral exercises flow from a divine operation upon the mind of a moral agent, and not from any natural faculty, principle, or taste, enabling him to originate his own internal exercises, or external actions." Vol. ii. p. 195.

"But there was no possible way in which he could *dispose* them to act right or wrong, but only by producing right or wrong volitions in their hearts." p. 40.

As the Doctor thus denies that a disposition, distinct from volition, and antecedent to it, enabling a moral agent to originate his own internal exercises, or external actions, ever exists; and denies also, that God can possibly *dispose* a moral agent to act right or wrong, in any other way than by *producing* right or wrong volitions themselves in his heart; he cannot of course mean by those phrases to designate an agency which produces such a disposition. Besides, under such a mode of agency, men, according to the Doctor, would be passive. "We know that love is a free, voluntary exercise, and not any taste, habit, or principle, which is totally inactive and involuntary. It is absurd to suppose, that God should require any

thing of us in which we are altogether *passive*." Vol. ii. p. 173, 174.

But the Doctor denies that men ever are passive under the divine influence. "Men act while they are acted upon by a divine operation." Vol. i. p. 223.

"As saints can act while they are acted upon, so sinners can act while they are acted upon." p. 228.

"If the making a new heart consists in the exercising of holy, instead of unholy affections, then sinners are not *passive*, but *active*, in regeneration." p. 178.

If that be true, and if "the good and evil heart are both made up of exercises," with no other difference than that "their exercises are diametrically opposite in their moral quality," p. 191, then the converse of the preceding proposition is equally true, viz. that, as the making a bad heart consists in the exercising of unholy instead of holy affections, *sinners* are not *passive* but *active* under the divine influence, in all their sinful agency.

From the first and last of these quotations, as well as from many other passages in the Doctor's volumes, it is seen that he holds, that a taste, habit, principle, or disposition, is perfectly inactive and involuntary: and that if God exerted an agen-

cy on men, producing such a taste or disposition, they would be perfectly *passive* under that agency. He infers from the fact, that love is a free, voluntary exercise, and not a taste or disposition; and that the making a new heart consists in the exercising of holy affections, and not in the production of a disposition; that men are not *passive*, but active under the divine agency. If thus he holds, that men are *active* under that agency, because voluntary exercises, and not a disposition, are produced by it; then he of course holds, that if a disposition were produced by it, they would be *passive* under it, and not active.

As then he holds, as stated in the quotations, that men are never *passive* under the divine agency, he cannot mean to denote by those phrases any agency under which, according to his own views, men would be *passive*. He means an agency that *produces the acts themselves* of men, not that merely brings them into a state in which they are *disposed* to act, or that produces a disposition which is *antecedent* to their acts, and which leads to those acts; and an agency that produces the acts themselves must be a *creating* agency.

Nor can he mean by that phraseology

to denote an agency by which God merely *excites* men to act, or to exert a power of acting, belonging to themselves; leaving their exercises to be the effects of *their* power, and only the indirect consequence, not immediate production of *His* power; for that would be producing nothing more nor less than a *disposition* to act. But the Doctor affirms, that "there is no possible way in which God can *dispose* men to act, but by *producing volitions* in their hearts."

Besides, he denies that the acts of men ever are the effects of their own power, and only the remote effects of God's operation; and also that men have any power to originate and exert acts of themselves, in such a way as that supposed. "Our moral exercises are the *productions* of the divine power." Vol. i. p. 224.

"There is no occasion for a distinct faculty of will, in order to put forth external actions, or internal exercises. It is God who worketh in men both to will and to do. Moral exercises flow from a divine operation upon the mind of a moral agent, and not from any natural faculty, principle, or taste, enabling him to originate his own internal exercises, or external actions." Vol. ii. p. 195.

As, then, the Doctor holds, that the acts of men never are the effects of their own power, as they would be under such a merely exciting agency; and that men have no power to put forth or originate their own acts, as they would possess under such an agency; he of course cannot mean to designate such an agency by that phraseology. Nor can he, for the same reason, mean an agency by which God merely *imparts* to men the *power* of acting, which they themselves exert in originating and putting forth acts: for if men do not *possess* any power of originating and exerting acts of themselves; and if, consequently, none of their acts are the effects of their own power, then no such power is communicated, and therefore no such agency as that by which God would merely impart the power of acting, is exerted on them.

This is obvious too, from the Doctor's argument derived from the dependence of men in support of the position, that God produces all their actions by a direct influence. He assumes it as an indubitable dictate of reason, that a creature cannot possess the power of acting. The power of exerting internal exercises and external actions does not and cannot belong to

his constitution. Power is an incommunicable attribute, and exists no where in the universe, but in God. These views are exhibited in the following quotations :

“ It is the dictate of right reason, that no created being is capable of acting independently.” He does not here mean, acting with an absolute exemption from all influence whatever, or control ; but acting with one’s own *power*, in distinction from another’s, as appears from his inferring, from the dependence of creatures, that their actions must be the *production of a Divine efficiency*. Since, if their dependence does not consist in an absolute destitution of power, he cannot infer from it that all their actions are produced by God’s power. If *they* possess power, it is to be inferred, that their actions are produced by that power, instead of God’s.

“ *Universal and absolute dependence goes into the very idea of a creature ; because independence is an attribute of the Divine nature, which even Omnipotence cannot communicate.*” Vol. i. p. 203. “ And since all men are *dependent agents*, all their *motions, exercises, or actions, must originate from a Divine efficiency*. We can no more *act* than we can *exist*, without the constant *aid and influence of the Deity.*” Vol. ii. p. 31.



A thing “originates from a Divine efficiency,” when the power which gives it existence is God’s; for “efficiency” is the efficacious exertion of power. If men can no more *act* than *exist* without the constant aid and influence of the Deity; then, as they do not possess within themselves the power at all of existing, or are not at all self-existent, but are kept in existence entirely by Divine power; so they do not possess in themselves at all the power of *acting*, but all their actions are created by Divine power: and the fact, that all their “actions *must* originate from a Divine efficiency,” arises from their being absolutely destitute of power.

Since, then, the Doctor regards the absolute dependence of men as consisting in an absolute destitution of power, and infers from it the impossibility of their exerting of themselves, acts which are the effects of their power, he cannot of course mean by the phraseology in question, to designate an agency by which the *power* of acting is *communicated*. For if he grant that the power of acting is communicated at all, he must, to be consistent, give up his views of the dependence of creatures, and abandon his argument erected on it, to prove that all the acts of men are the

production of Divine power; for it makes no difference in the nature of their dependence, nor in the fact that their actions are the effect of their own power, and not God's, whether the power of exerting them is communicated at the *time* it is exerted, or at the *commencement* of their existence. If they actually *possess* power, they are not absolutely *destitute* of it, as the Doctor teaches;—and if they possess the power by which their actions are exerted, then their actions are the productions of *their own*, and not of *God's* power.

Since, then, the Doctor could not have used the phraseology under consideration, to designate an agency by which the power of acting is communicated, without contradicting his views and reasonings respecting the dependence of men, it is apparent that he cannot have employed it to denote such an agency. Nor can he mean to designate by those phrases, an agency by which God merely *governs* men in the exercise of *their* power; since merely to *govern* men, or exert on them an agency which simply determines the *mode* in which they act or exert their power, is nothing more nor less than to bring them into a *state* in which they are

*disposed* or choose to act in a given manner. But the Doctor denies that God can *dispose* men to act in any other way than by producing, that is, creating their volitions; and of course denies that He can *govern* them, or determine the mode of their acting, in any other way than by creating their actions. And moreover, he denies that men possess the power by which their actions are exerted. Their actions are, according to his representation, entirely the effects of God's power. Of course he cannot mean to denote by the language referred to, an agency employed in governing them in the exercise of power belonging to themselves. Nor can he, for the same reason, be supposed to use those phrases to designate an agency consisting of part, or all of the kinds of agency which have been mentioned, united.

If, therefore, as thus appears, he neither employed it to denote an agency which merely produces in men a disposition to act, or exert their own power, or excites men to act, or exert their own power; nor an agency which imparts the power of acting; nor an agency consisting of part, or all of those kinds of agency; then, if he intended to denote by it

any kind of agency, he must have employed it to designate a creating agency. For there are no other conceivable modes of agency by which God could, by a *direct influence*, call the volitions of men into existence, than either that by which he would merely produce in them a *disposition* to act, or excite them to act or exert their own power in a given way; in which case their actions would be the production or effect of their own power, and his agency only the cause or occasion of their exerting their power in such a manner; or, that by which he would communicate the power of acting; in which case their volitions would also be the effect of their own power, and his agency only the cause of their possessing that power; or, an agency both imparting power and producing a disposition to act, or governing the exercise of that power; or else a creating agency; an agency which is neither employed in producing a disposition, nor in governing men in the exercise of their own power, nor in imparting to them the power of acting, but which, without the intervention of any such steps, calls their volitions immediately into existence. And as he cannot, as we have shown, have designed to designate by the language in

question, either of the former kinds of agency, he must, if he intended to designate any kind of agency by it, have employed it to denote the last—a creating agency. And moreover, whether he intended by the phraseology under consideration, to designate a particular mode of Divine agency, or not, it is perfectly apparent, from the considerations adduced, to show that if he intended to designate any mode, it must be that of creating; that *that* is the mode of agency which he regards and means by his theory to exhibit God as exercising. For he denies, as shown, that God exerts any other conceivable mode of agency on mankind, beside that of creating; and therefore must regard and mean to exhibit God as exerting that, and only that mode.

Such, then, are the Doctor's views of the Divine agency on men. He considers its mode as that of creating. He represents God as calling the acts of men into existence, as He called the material world into existence at its creation. God then said, *Let there be light, and there was light.* According to the Doctor, He now says, *Let the acts of men exist, and the acts of men are.*

The Doctor represents this agency as extending to all the acts of men, both internal and external. This the reader must have already discovered. It will be seen more clearly from the following quotations :

“ Mind cannot *act*, any more than matter can *move*, without a Divine agency. There must be the exercise of Divine agency in every human action; without which, it is impossible to conceive that God should govern moral agents, and make mankind act in perfect conformity to his own designs. This is the only scriptural representation of Divine Providence; and, according to this representation, it is easy to see that all actions, as well as all events, may be traced up to the over-ruling hand of God. It is a gross absurdity to suppose, that the providence of God is more extensive than his agency, or that he ever governs men without exerting a positive influence over them. It is God who worketh in men to will and to do in all cases, without exception.” Vol. ii. p. 40. 41, 42.

From this language, the Doctor obviously considers the Divine agency as extending to all the events that ever take place in the minds of men; not only to

those acts of which, according to his account, the heart consists, “affections, desires, intentions, and volitions;” but also to all the acts of perception, reason, memory, imagination, conscience, and all other forms of operation of which the mind is the subject. He represents “Divine Providence” as extending to “all actions as well as events;” and declares it “a gross absurdity to suppose, that the *providence* of God is *more extensive* than His *agency*; or that He ever *governs* men without exerting a *positive influence* over them.” If, then, God governs all actions and events, He governs all those of which men are the subjects: and if He never governs men without a positive influence over them, then He governs all the actions and events which take place in their minds by a positive influence; that is, according to the Doctor’s theory, creates them.

The Doctor no where does, nor could with propriety, separate the “exercises of the heart, affections, desires, intentions, and volitions,” and “the external actions,” from the other operations of the mind, in such a manner as to denominate the former, the *actions*, and the only *actions* of men, in distinction from the latter. The mind acts as much in perceiving, judging,

recollecting, imagining, and other similar operations, as in loving or hating, desiring or intending. The difference in the state of the mind, when those two classes of operation occur, is, that the *mode* of its operation is *different*—not that it is *active* when the former, and *inactive* when the latter class takes place.

And had he made such a distinction between those two classes of acts, his views of the dependence of men must have led him to regard the latter, as produced by the same kind of agency, as the former.

His views of mankind, as absolutely destitute of power, presented in his argument on that subject, just quoted, employed to prove the necessity of a direct agency; his use of the scriptural passages, “In him we *live* and *move* and have our *being*,” “we are not sufficient of ourselves to *think* any thing of ourselves, but our sufficiency is of God,” to prove the same necessity; and his unequivocal and unlimited declarations in the preceding quotations show, that he considers God’s agency as extending in the same manner to “all the actions and events,” both internal and external, of which men are the subjects.



The Doctor's theory therefore is compactly embodied in the proposition—

GOD CREATES ALL THE ACTS OF MEN; *or all the internal and external actions and events, which may be predicated of them.*

According to this theory, God creates not only all the internal exercises and external actions themselves of men, but also of course the *nature* of those exercises and actions—the *nature* of all their perceptions, that is, that they are perceptions of such objects as they are, and not of others; and such kinds of perceptions of those objects, and not different ones; and perceptions of such degrees of strength and clearness, and not of other degrees: and so also the nature of all their acts of judgment, memory, imagination, conscience, &c.; and likewise the nature of all the exercises of their hearts, affections, ~~senses~~, *desires*, intentions, and volitions—that is, that they are virtuous and not vicious, or vicious and not virtuous; and so also the nature of their external actions. For as the agency of God is the sole cause that those exercises and actions possess *existence*, it must of course be the sole cause that they possess *such* an existence as they

do. To suppose, that while they owe their *existence* solely to God's agency, they owe their *nature* to some other agency, is to suppose that some other agency than God's is concerned in giving them existence; since that, in its nature, which distinguishes each one of those acts from all others of the same kind, is a part of that act, as much as that in its nature, which distinguishes *one class* of those acts from *another*, is a part of that class: and it is also to suppose, that God's agency, that is, the exercise of His omnipotence, is controlled or modified by some other agency; both of which suppositions are absurd.

As, therefore, according to this theory, God creates all the acts of men and their nature, the sole reason, that *some* of those acts *differ* from *others* is, that the *exercise* of God's *power* in creating them is *different*; or rather, that God's *volitions*, by which He exercises His power, are *different*.—His omnipotent *volitions*, being the sole cause of their *nature*, a *difference* in His *volitions* must be the sole cause of the *difference* in their *nature*.

The volitions of men are, according to the theory, always produced in the view of motives. "Choice always implies mo-

tive. It is out of the power of the Deity to oblige men to act, without making them willing to act in the view of motives. Accordingly, when He works in us both to will and to do, he first exhibits motives before our minds, and then excites us to act voluntarily in view of the motives exhibited." Vol. i. 226.

Motives consist of bodily sensations, appetites, mental affections, perceptions of truths and of external objects, conceptions of things, past volitions, and external actions recollected, and perhaps some other mental operations. All these motives of course, according to Doctor E., are created; as in his view all the actions and events, both internal and external, of which men are the subjects, are the productions of Divine power.

By his language, therefore, "when he works in us both to will and to do, he first exhibits motives before our minds, and then excites us to act voluntarily in view of the motives exhibited;" he means that God always creates motives in the mind immediately antecedent to his creating volitions there; or, that the order of time in which God creates motives and volitions, is, that volitions always immediately succeed motives.

But motives, according to the Doctor's representation, have no influence in exciting the mind to volition. Such is necessarily the fact, if, agreeably to his view, all volitions are the immediate productions of Divine power. Whatever God creates, must owe its existence solely to His agency, and not at all to any other agency. And if "mind cannot *act*, any more than matter can *move* without a *Divine agency*," then it cannot be *excited* to action by mere motives. This view the Doctor exhibits in the following passages:—"The bare perception of motive is incapable of producing volition. He not only addresses their eyes and ears by external objects, and their understandings and consciences by moral motives; but he actually operates upon their hearts, and there produces new feelings or affections by the same almighty power which he exerted in creating the world." Vol. i. 226. 361.

The connexion, therefore, of motives with volitions, is not that of a cause with an effect, but simply of an antecedent with a consequent.

It seems too, that in the Doctor's view, motives do not determine the *mode* of volitions; that is, that they are a choice of

such things as they are, and a refusal of such things as they are, and not a choice of those things of which they are a refusal, and a refusal of those things of which they are a choice : or, in other words, that in the case of any given volition, it is not the *nature* of, nor any thing pertaining to, that motive then before the mind, which is to the mind the greatest apparent good, that is the *reason* that the mind *views* it as the greatest good, and yields to its influence. Nor is it the *nature* of, nor any thing pertaining to, that motive before the mind, which is to the mind the least apparent good, that is the *reason* that the mind *regards* it as the least good, and resists its influence; but the sole reason that the one motive appears the greatest and not the least good, and the other appears the least and not the greatest good, is the *Divine influence*.

We are presented with this view in the following passage:—"Suppose a man at leisure desires to read, and some person presents him a Bible and a Novel. Though he knows the contents of each of these books, yet it depends upon a Divine operation on his mind which of them he shall choose to read : for the bare perception of motive is incapable of pro-

ducing volition. If God works in him to will to read the Bible," &c. Vol. i. 226.

Here the two motives are, the Bible and the Novel, of the contents of each of which the man possesses a perfect knowledge; and it depends entirely, according to the Doctor, upon the *Divine operation*, and not at all upon the nature of, or any thing pertaining to the motives, which of them he shall choose, and which refuse; that is, which he shall view as the greatest good, and which as the least; and which, therefore, he shall yield to, and which resist.

The same view is exhibited in the following passage:—"There was a necessary and infallible connexion between Saul's actions, and the motives from which he acted; and this certain connexion could be owing to no other cause than a secret Divine influence on his will, which gave energy and success to the motives which induced him to execute the designs of Providence." Page 227.

Here the *Divine influence* is affirmed to have given energy and success to *those motives from which he acted*, and not to the others before his mind; and that influence is declared to have been the *sole cause* of the infallible connexion between

his *actions* and those *motives*. It was not the *nature* of those motives, nor any thing pertaining to them, therefore, that was the reason that Saul regarded them as the greatest good, and yielded to their influence; but it was solely the *agency* of God.

Motives, then, in the Doctor's view, are not necessary, and are not employed to determine the mode of volitions, as explained above. They do not hold the relation to volitions of a cause of their mode, any more than of their existence. They are necessary, merely as an *occasion* to the existence and the mode of volitions. Volitions cannot be created in the mind unless motives are before the mind; and volitions of a particular kind cannot be created, unless motives respecting the actions, which are the objects of the volitions, are present to the mind, when the volitions are produced. A volition about an apple, for instance, cannot be created, unless an apple is present to the mind as a motive to that volition.

Thus, according to the Doctor, "choice always implies motive. It is out of the power of the Deity to oblige men to act, without making them willing to act in the view of motives." Vol. i. p. 226. And, "It ought to be considered, that a gene-

ral propensity to sin will not lead any person to any particular sin, without a particular motive or temptation to that sin. There must always be some objective motive presented to the view of the mind, in order to excite or draw forth the native depravity of the heart." Vol. ii. p. 73. That is, to illustrate the Doctor's view by an example, all that is necessary, in order that a man may have a given volition about an apple and an orange, say a choice of the apple and a refusal of the orange, is, that the apple and orange be both present to his mind as motives. His having such a volition as he has, that is, his choice of the apple, does not depend at all on any thing distinguishing it from other apples, as its differing in shape, size, colour, and taste, from the orange, in a manner unlike any other apple; or, that it is a good apple instead of a bad one, or a bad one instead of a good one. Nor does his refusal of the orange depend at all on any thing distinguishing it from other oranges. The apple would be chosen were it any other apple, and the orange rejected were it any other orange. That the particular volition in question should take place, nothing is necessary in regard to motives, but that the



apple and orange should be before the mind ; and nothing but that would be necessary, in order that any other given volition respecting them should be produced, as, the choice of the orange, and refusal of the apple. The greatest possible variation in the *mode* of volition respecting them might take place, while the motives remained the same.

And such, according to the Doctor's theory, must necessarily be the fact. For if, agreeably to his view, as shown above, motives do not have any influence in *exciting* the mind to exert volitions, they cannot have any influence on the *mode* of its volitions, or in determining which motive before the mind shall be regarded as the greatest good, and chosen ; and which as the least good, and rejected. They are only necessary that volitions may *exist* ; and do nothing more than render it *possible* that they should be produced.

The Doctor, notwithstanding these views, holds, that men are moral agents under this agency ; and we deem it due to him to exhibit this, as well as the other part of his scheme, that however inconsistent it may be with that, it may be seen, that *he* does not admit, nor perceive its inconsistency, nor therefore admit any

of the inferences to be drawn from its inconsistency.

They are *active* under the divine influence.—“Saints act and are acted upon by a divine operation in all their holy and virtuous exercises. As saints can act while they are acted upon, so sinners can act while they are acted upon.” Vol. i. pp. 203, 223.

“Sinners are not passive, but active in regeneration.” “Men are regenerated, converted, and sanctified by the special operation of the divine spirit, and are always equally active under his gracious influence. For it is impossible that he should produce love or faith or repentance, or any other gracious desire, affection, or volition, without their being active.” Vol. ii. pp. 178, 165.

The Doctor holds it to be equally impossible that any sinful volition should be produced without men’s being equally active. “It is absolutely impossible for any to prove, that human dependence and activity are inconsistent with each other.—Vol. i. p. 218.

They act freely: “Men always act freely while God works in them, both to will and to do of his good pleasure. As saints can act freely under a divine in-

fluence, so sinners can act freely under a divine influence." Vol. i. p. 228.

Their agency and actions are their own. "They are real and proper agents in all their voluntary exercises and exertions. Their actions are all their own, and as much their own, as if they acted without any dependence upon God, or any other being in the universe." Vol. i. p. 33.

"If it be true that men act, while they are acted upon by a divine operation, then their actions are their own, and not the actions of God. The divine agency is not human agency, nor human agency the divine agency." p. 224.

They are under moral obligation to obey all the commands of God, and worthy of praise or blame for all their actions. "The bare light of nature teaches that every person ought to exercise universal benevolence. Every intelligent creature is capable of knowing the difference between moral good and moral evil; and this knowledge lays him under moral obligation to exercise true benevolence toward all proper objects of it." Vol. ii. p. 176.

"If sinners are able to act freely while they are acted upon by the Deity, then

they have no manner of excuse, for neglecting to obey any of his commands."—  
Vol. i. p. 246.

"Their actions are all their own, and constitute them either holy or unholy, virtuous or vicious, and worthy of praise or blame, reward or punishment." Vol. ii. p. 33.

They have natural power to do otherwise than they do. "Those events which God has decreed to bring about by the instrumentality of men, they have natural power to prevent. As it is always true that men have natural power to fulfil any decree, which they are appointed to fulfil, so it is equally true that they always have the same natural power to prevent the fulfilment of it." Vol. ii. pp. 53, 56.

"There is nothing, in the whole circle of created objects, which affords any argument to prove, that man's dependence destroys his moral agency." Vol. ii. p. 217.

Thus the Doctor, as well as other theologians, regards men as moral agents. It would seem, however, that their moral agency, according to his theory, is a very different thing from what it is, according to the views commonly entertained.—  
Since, by the Doctor's account, men are

entirely destitute of power, their agency does not consist at all in the *exercise* of power belonging to themselves; all their actions are *created* by divine power, and cannot therefore, did they possess ever so much, involve any exercise of power belonging to themselves. They are not agents as far as it respects the exercise of power belonging to themselves, any more than Adam was an agent in God's taking the rib from his side. Their actions, like that effect in Adam, are the effects of divine power solely. Their agency, therefore, consists solely in their being the *subjects*, in which those effects are created. Peter was the agent in the act of *denying* Christ, simply because that act was created in his mind; and was not the agent of *betraying* Christ, simply because that act was not created in his mind, but in another's. And their agency is *moral*, simply because those effects, called *volitions*, are created in the *view of motives*.

According to the views commonly entertained, men are agents, because they exercise *power* belonging to themselves in all their actions; and they are moral agents, because they exercise their power *voluntarily* in the *view of motives*. Adam was an agent in eating the forbidden fruit.

because he did it in the voluntary exercise of his own power. He was not an agent in having the rib taken from his side, because that was not done by his power, but was done wholly by God's power.

*Power*, according to the views commonly entertained, is that by which a being *exerts* acts, or *produces* effects; and in *nature*, though not in *degree*, is the same in all active beings. According to the Doctor's theory, however, it would seem, that the power of *God* is entirely different in its *nature* from the power of *dependent* beings.

The power of God is that just described, by which He produces effects; but the power of creatures is simply a *capacity* to have *effects produced* in them by *God's power*.

When therefore the Doctor, after giving us his theory of the *mode* in which the actions of men are produced by divine power, tells us, that men are *agents*, and *act* under the divine operation, he must be interpreted as merely meaning by that language, in order to render it consistent with his theory, that men are the *subjects* of those created effects, called actions, and predicated of them; for that, if those

effects are created, as his theory represents, is the only possible sense in which they can be agents. When he says they are *moral* agents, he must be regarded as merely meaning, that they are the subjects of a *class* of created effects, called *volitions*, which are created in the *view of motives*. When he affirms that men have *power to act*, he must be considered as meaning nothing more than that men are *capable* of having those *effects created* in them: and when he adds, that men have *power to do otherwise* than they *do*, he must be understood as only meaning, that men possess such a *nature* that *God might create other effects* in them than He *does* create; as that is the only possible meaning his language can possess, consistently with his theory, 'that all their actions are created by divine power.'

It would seem too, that the Doctor does, or should, in accordance with his theory, regard the mind as a torpid, inactive thing in its nature, as much as matter is; as incapable of acting, as matter is of moving; and as indisposed to action, as matter is to motion. "Mind cannot *act* any more than matter can *move* without a divine agency." Vol. ii. p. 41.

The difference between the natures of

mind and matter, therefore, in his view, consists in this, that the nature of mind is such, that it is capable of having those effects, called acts of perception, reason, conscience, volition, and other mental operations created in it; and the nature of matter is such, that is capable of having those effects, called motions, created in it. Each is adapted to be the subject of that class of effects which is created in it.

Such is the Doctor's theory of the divine agency on mankind.

God, by his immediate effi-*cience*, *creates* all the *acts* of men.

Those acts, called volitions, He always creates in the *view* of *motives*.

Men are agents under His influence, inasmuch as they are the subjects of the acts created in them.

They are moral agents, inasmuch as they are subjects of that class of acts called volitions.

They are worthy of praise or blame for all their actions, inasmuch as they are moral agents.

The great point in which his theory differs from the doctrines of the Calvinistic Divines, on the subject of the Divine agency, and the point from which the other differences result, is, its exhibition



of the *mode* of God's agency. All Calvinistic Divines agree with the Doctor in the belief, that God's agency *extends* to *all* the *actions* of men. It is an article in all their creeds, that God's providence is, "His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures and all their actions." But their doctrine is confined to the FACT, that God *preserves* mankind, and *governs* all their *actions*—the *fact*, that His government is *consistent* with their moral *agency*—and the *fact*, that the Holy Spirit exerts a peculiar agency on the subjects of sanctification. They do not pretend to teach or know the *MODE* of His agency.

Doctor E.'s is a theory of the *mode* of His agency on mankind, or the manner in which He brings all the actions of mankind into existence; which he exhibits as that of creating.

From this view of the mode of God's agency, the other parts of his theory, differing from the views commonly entertained, seem to result, viz.—That men are entirely destitute of power. (We ought not, perhaps, to suppose, that this view is a consequence of the former; as the Doctor, in more than one place, infers the former from this:) That God's agency is

concerned in precisely the same manner in all the actions of men, whether holy or sinful: That the nature of motives does not determine what kind of volitions respecting them take place: His views respecting the nature of moral agency; of power; of mind, &c. &c.

We are aware that the pretence is made, that the Doctor's theory, though it exhibits the mode of God's agency as that of creating, yet is not a theory of the *mode* of His agency. But nothing can be more futile than this pretence. For whether it was the intention of the Doctor or not, in constructing his theory, to give a theory of the *mode* of Divine agency, it is certain that he has done so. There is no mode of Divine agency, of which our conceptions are so simple and well defined, as that of creating—in which the Most High, by His simple volition, calls things into existence, without the co-operation or secondary agency of any thing else whatever. And the Doctor, in exhibiting God as creating all the acts of men, and events of which they are the subjects, has given as specific and well defined a theory of the *mode* of His agency, as our language can express, or our minds conceive: and in his various reasonings to sustain his

theory, as we have shown in the statement of it, he has done all which he could, to the same purpose, had it been his specific object to give a theory of the mode, by denying that God exerts on mankind any other conceivable mode of agency than that of creating.

We are also aware, that in reply to these remarks, the pretence will be made, that though the theory exhibits the agency of God as a creating agency, yet it exhibits His agency as admitting the intervention of means, and that it does not pretend to teach the *mode* of His agency through them, but simply that He acts through them. But this pretence is equally futile. For if the agency of God is universally a creating agency, its *mode* is the same, whether it excludes or admits the intervention of means. To pretend, while teaching, that God *creates all* the effects which take place in the mind—that it is unknown *how* He produces those effects which take place through the intervention of means,—is to pretend, that it is unknown that He *creates* those effects.

Besides, what, according to this theory, are means? Are they any thing besides motives? And what are motives? Are

they any thing but perceptions, sensations, recollections, or other operations of the mind, created by God immediately antecedent to His creating volitions?—According to this theory, *means* are nothing more than acts or effects in the mind, created by God immediately antecedent to His creating volitions; and they have no efficiency or influence whatever in producing volitions; nor do they constitute any ground of certainty that volitions shall be created: they serve only to make the state of the mind such, that volitions may be created. The mind, when motives are created in it, is in the circumstances necessary, in order that volitions may be created. The acts of creating motives and volitions are totally distinct from each other; and God, in creating volitions, does not act *through* means at all, but only *after* He has created motives. Because God creates volitions immediately after He creates motives, and, while motives exist before the mind, it no more follows, that in creating volitions He acts *through* means, than because He created Adam after He had created the earth on which he was to exist, it follows, that in creating him, He acted *through* means. The acts are totally independent

of each other; and the act of creating volitions is totally independent of the motives, as far as it respects any influence exerted by the motives on the mode of that act. Motives do nothing but prepare the mind to have volitions created in it.

Thus, according to the theory, God never acts THROUGH means. Means are nothing more than a particular set of effects which He creates in the mind; and all that pertains to them that constitutes them means, is, that they are the immediate antecedents of another class of effects which He creates, and serve to fit the mind to have this other class of effects created in it. The mode of His agency is the same in each case. He acts directly on the mind in both cases, and not through the medium of any secondary causes. The intervention of means, according to the theory, in the Divine agency, is nothing more than God's uniformly creating one set of effects immediately antecedent to His creating another. Motives are antecedents to volitions. Because, therefore, God creates those effects in that order, and, in that sense, admits the intervention of means, to pretend that this theory, in exhibiting the *mode* of the Divine agency in producing all the acts of men.

as that of creating, does not decide what the *mode* of that agency through means is, is supremely futile and ridiculous.

What now is the basis on which the Doctor has erected this theory? Neither all the foundation, nor all the superstructure, is found united in any single discourse; but the parts, of which they consist, are scattered through the pages of the several sermons already quoted, and others, and left to be gradually collected by the reader, and united into a whole.

His first step toward establishing the theory is, to prove that God exerts a *positive, direct influence* on the minds of men in all their *holy* actions. Then, from some of the same and other arguments, he advances to the inference, that God exerts a *similar* influence on men in all their *sinful* and *other* actions.

His second step is, to prove that the *mode* of the influence which God exerts on men in their *holy* actions, is that of *creating* those actions. Then, from some of the same and other arguments, he advances to the conclusion, that the *mode* of the influence which God exerts on men in their *sinful* and *other* actions, is that of *creating* those actions. To sustain the position, that God exerts a *direct, positive influ-*

ence on the minds of saints in all their *holy* actions, he alleges *five* arguments: one derived from reason, three from the Scriptures, and one from the prayers of good men.

His *first* argument, denominated a dictate of reason, is founded on the dependence of creatures.

His position is, that creatures are “absolutely dependent;” that is, in his view, destitute of the power of acting. He thence infers the necessity of a *Divine operation* on them to make them act; and from that necessity deduces the conclusion, that God actually exerts on them, in all their *holy actions*, such a direct influence. See vol. i. p. 203.

The three next, his scriptural arguments, though not thus formally divided, are derived from the three following sources:

His *second* argument is founded on passages asserting God’s *government* of men: and he presents the fact, that He *governs* them, as a ground for the inference that He acts on them, in all their *holy actions*, by a *Divine operation* on their minds. See p. 203, 204.

His *third* argument is founded on passages of Scripture, teaching the *dependence*

of men on God. He presents the fact, that they are dependent, as a ground for the same inference. See p. 203.

His *fourth* argument is derived from passages teaching that men are *renewed* and *sanctified* by the Holy Spirit: and from that fact he draws the conclusion, that in all their *holy actions* God exerts on them a positive influence. See p. 204.

His *fifth* argument is derived from the *prayers of good men*. His position is, that the prayers of good men for Divine assistance, *presuppose* the *necessity* of a *Divine operation* on their hearts, in all their *holy actions*: and he thence deduces the conclusion, that in all *their holy actions* they are acted upon by such an operation. See p. 210.

He employs *five* arguments also to sustain the position, that God acts on men, in all their *sinful actions*, and *all the other events of which they are the subjects*, by the same kind of agency.

His *first* argument is founded on the *dependence of men*; and is like the other on that subject. See vol. ii. p. 39, 40, 41.

His *second* is derived from *passages of Scripture*, teaching that God *governs men* in their *sinful conduct*. He infers from the fact that He governs, that He *governs* by a *direct influence*. See vol. ii. p. 29.



His *third* argument is derived from passages teaching the *dependence* of men; and is like the other from that source. See vol. ii. p. 31.

His *fourth* argument is derived from the *possibility* of God's producing their actions by such an agency. See vol. i. p. 223.

His *fifth* argument is founded on the *assumption*, that by such an agency we may account for the fall of Adam. See vol. i. p. 234. 237, 238.

He advances to the conclusion, that the *mode* of God's agency in acting on men, in their *holy* actions, by a Divine operation, is that of *creating*, in the following manner:

He first takes it as granted, or self-evident, that if in those actions men are acted upon by a *Divine operation*, those actions are *created*; or that *proof*, that those actions come into existence under such an operation, is proof that they are created, as appears from the following passage:

“It appears, from what has been said,” that is, from his proofs that God acts on men, in all their holy actions, by a Divine operation on their minds; for that is all he had said from which he could draw the conclusion, and all he had attempted to prove, “that the *hearts of saints*

are *created*; or that their free and voluntary exercises are the *production of Divine power.*" Vol. i. p. 231. See also p. 280, 281.

In the *next place*, he assumes the position, that it is agreeable to the *nature of holiness to be created*; and employs *four arguments to prove it*: *First*, That it is *possible* that it should be created. The argument is this: volitions are virtuous or vicious in their own *natures*, without any respect to their *cause*. Then *assuming* the position, that the first volition of a created agent must have an *involuntary cause*, and *supposing* that volition to be holy, he concludes that its cause *may be a creating cause*, and the holy volition *created*.—*Secondly*, He infers, from the dependence of creatures, that their holiness *must be created*.—*Thirdly*, He infers it from the consideration that God is *able to create it*.—*Fourthly*, He deduces it from passages of Scripture, ascribing the *renovation and sanctification* of the heart to God. Vol. i. pp. 279, 280, 281, 282.

His argument to prove, that the mode of God's agency is the *same* in acting on men in their *sinful actions*, is founded on their *dependence*. From their "absolute dependence" on God he infers, that they need the *same kind and degree of divine*

*agency* in doing *evil* as in doing *good*. And again *assuming*, that the only *possible* way in which God can *dispose* men to act right or wrong is, by *producing*, that is, *creating* right or wrong volitions in their hearts, he infers, that His agency is concerned in *precisely the same manner* in their *wrong* as their *right* actions. Vol. ii. p. 40.

From this statement of the Doctor's arguments, he appears obviously to have chosen a much more circuitous method of establishing his theory, than was necessary. Since he has, or such is their nature, he might have, in consistency with himself, employed all the arguments to prove the single proposition—God acts on men in all their actions, by a *direct agency*, including the two propositions, 1st. He acts on them in all their *holy actions*, by such an agency; and, 2d. He acts on them in all their *sinful and other actions*, by such an agency—which he has employed to establish either of these propositions separately; for his *first*, *second*, and *third* arguments, to support each are the same.

His *fourth* argument, to prove the *first* proposition, he might also, consistently with himself, have employed to prove the second proposition; for if his assumption be correct, that such is the nature of hu-

man dependence, that men need the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil as in doing good; and that there can be but one mode of agency, by which God can bring their volitions into existence; then the texts, alleged to prove, that the Holy Spirit exerts a *direct* influence on the minds of men, whenever they exert one class of volitions, may also be used to prove, that a similar agency is exerted on them whenever they exert the other class of volitions: since, if there be but one mode, in which God can exert an influence on men to bring their volitions into existence; those passages, proving that He exerts a direct influence on the minds of men, when they exercise a given *kind* of volitions, prove that He exerts on them the same kind of influence, when they exert any other kind of volitions.

His *fifth* argument, to sustain the *first*, might have been used to prove the second proposition; for if the prayers of good men, presupposing their need of a *divine operation* on their hearts in all their holy actions, prove that in all their holy actions men are acted upon by such an operation; and if there be but one mode of influence which God exerts on men, then those prayers prove, that men are

acted upon in *all* their actions by the *same* mode of operation.

His *fourth* argument, to prove the *second*, is only an inference or assumption from his proof of the *first* proposition. He assumes the possibility of God's acting on men in all their sinful actions, by a direct influence, from his being able, there considered as proved, (third inference, vol. i. p. 228) to act on men in their holy actions by such an influence; and from that possibility infers, that He does exert such an influence on men in all their sinful agency.

From this assumption it would seem, that the Doctor considers the arguments, alleged to prove the *first* proposition, as furnishing equal proof of the *second*; for if arguments proving, that God exerts a positive influence on men in all their holy actions, prove the *possibility* of His exerting such an influence on them in all their sinful actions; and if that possibility proves, as the Doctor means to teach in that inference, that He actually does exert on them such an influence in all their sinful actions; then those arguments, in proving that *possibility*, prove the *fact*, that God exerts such an influence

on them in all their sinful actions, and may be alleged directly in proof of it.

His *fifth* argument, to sustain the second proposition, may be employed to prove any proposition about the origin of things, and will yield as much support to one as another. In like manner, all his arguments to prove separately the *two* propositions, 1st, The *mode* of God's agency on men, in their *holy actions*, is that of *creating*; and 2d. The *mode* of his agency on them, in *all their other actions*, is the *same*; he might have employed to prove the *single* proposition including those two, viz. that the *mode* of God's agency on mankind, in *all their actions*, is that of *creating*. For his first step. viz. the assumption that proof, that God, in all the holy actions of men, exerts a direct influence on their minds, is proof, that the *mode* of that influence is that of *creating*, may be taken in respect to the *second* proposition as well as the *first*: proof that, in all their *holy actions* He exerts on them a direct influence, is no better proof that He *creates* those actions, than proof, that in all their *other actions* He exerts on them a direct influence, is proof that He *creates* those actions.

His second argument to prove the *first*.

and his argument to prove the *second* proposition, are the same; for the position of that *second* argument, to prove the first proposition, is, that it is agreeable to the *nature* of holiness to be *created*. But that position is involved in the position in the *first* part of his argument, to prove the *second* proposition, and is expressed in the *last* part of that argument; for if, as he assumes in the first part, the same *kind and degree of divine agency* must necessarily be exerted on men in their *sinful* as in their *holy* actions: the *ground* of that necessity must be, that it is agreeable to the *nature of sinful*, as it is of holy actions, to be *created*; and that is plainly expressed in the assumption in the *last* part of the argument, viz. that the only *possible* way in which God can *dispose* men to act right or wrong is, by *producing* right or wrong volitions in their hearts; and in the inference from it, that therefore His agency is concerned in *precisely the same manner* in the production of sinful and holy actions. If the only possible way, in which God can bring sinful and holy actions into existence is, by producing them in the heart, it must be agreeable and equally so, to the *nature* of sinful and holy actions to be produced in that manner; and all the

reasonings employed to prove that it is *agreeable* to the nature of holiness to be created, may be used with equal conclusiveness to prove, that it is *agreeable* to the nature of sin to be created.

Thus, his first reason, that it is *possible* that holy actions should be created, may be employed with equal propriety, as he does indeed use it in the inference, vol. i. p. 228, to prove, that all others are created.

His second, from the dependence of creatures, is precisely the argument he employs to prove, that all sinful actions are created.

His third, that God is *able* to create holiness, is equally applicable to prove, that He creates sin. He holds, vol. i. p. 228, that God is *able* to create sin; and if His ability to create holiness may be employed to prove, that it is agreeable to the nature of holiness to be created—His ability to create sin may be also alleged to prove, that it is agreeable to the nature of sin to be created.

His fourth argument, likewise, he might, consistently with his views, have used to show, that it is agreeable to the nature of sin to be created; for if a passage teaching, that God exerts an influence on men



in their *holy* actions, may be alleged to prove, that it is agreeable to the *nature* of holiness to be *created*; then, since the Doctor holds, that the same kind and degree of divine agency is necessary to the production of *sinful* as *holy* actions, the passage may be alleged to prove, that it is agreeable to the *nature* of *sin* to be created.

His arguments to prove, that *all* the actions, holy and sinful, of men, take place under a *divine operation* on their minds, are likewise the same with those (or such is their nature, that he might, consistently with himself, have employed them to prove *one* of the positions, as well as the *other*;) which he alleges to prove, that the *mode* of God's agency on them, in all their actions, is that of *creating*.

Thus, in his first step to the conclusion, that all their actions are *created*, he assumes it as a thing of course, that proof, that actions are exerted under a *divine operation* on the mind, is proof, that they are *created*. And in his second step he assumes the position, that it is *agreeable* to the *nature* of *all actions* to be *created*, and alleges that position as proof, that all actions are *created*. But the reasons he employs to prove, that it is *agreeable* to the

*nature* of all actions to be *created*, viz. the *possibility* of their being created; the *necessity* from human dependence of their being *created*; the *ability* of God to create them; and passages showing, that He *exerts* an agency on men in their actions, are precisely the reasons he alleges, or such is their *nature*, he might with equal propriety allege them to prove, that all actions are exerted under a *divine operation* on the mind. If then those reasons, proving that all actions are exerted under a *divine operation* on the mind, prove that it is *agreeable* to the *nature* of all actions to be *created*; and if its being agreeable to the nature of all actions to be created is proof, that they *are created*, then those reasons, proving that all actions are exerted under a *divine operation* of the mind, prove that all actions *are created*.

Thus it appears, that the Doctor employs, or such is their nature, that he might with equal propriety employ, precisely the same arguments to prove the several propositions, as they are found scattered in his volumes—God acts on men in all their holy actions by a *direct operation* on their minds—God acts on men in all their *other* actions by a *direct operation* on their minds precisely the

*same in kind and degree—God creates all the holy actions of men—and God creates all the other actions of men.*

Had he chosen therefore the most direct method of establishing his theory, he would have embodied it in the single proposition, including those four—*God creates all the actions of men*—and advanced his arguments to prove his whole theory at once, by establishing that proposition; instead of repeating them to prove its several parts, as separated in those propositions.

His proposition and proofs would then have assumed the following arrangement:

The proposition expressing the theory:

*God creates all the actions of men.*

The reasonings in proof of the proposition:

*First,* The argument from the dependence of creatures.

*Secondly,* The argument from passages of Scripture, asserting God's government of men.

*Thirdly,* The argument from passages respecting the dependence of men.

*Fourthly,* The argument from passages

teaching that men are renewed and sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

*Fifthly*, The argument from the prayers of good men.

*Sixthly*, The argument from the possibility of God's creating all the actions of men.

*Seventhly*, The argument from the adaptation of the theory to account for the fall of Adam.

These are all the arguments the Doctor employs to support the whole, or any part of his theory; and he might, in entire consistency with himself, as shown above, have employed them all to sustain the four propositions separately, of which his theory is made up; or to sustain the single proposition in which the whole is embodied.

It is not necessary, therefore, in order to the refutation of his whole theory, to refute his arguments in every instance in which he employs them. A refutation of them in regard to the *one* proposition expressing the whole theory, will be a refutation of them in regard to every purpose for which he employs them: For, in the first place, he employs the propositions, "God exerts, in all the *holy actions* of men, a *direct operation* on their minds;" and

“God *creates* all the *holy actions* of men,” as perfectly *synonymous*, as appears from his use of the words production and creation synonymously, and produce and create also; from his taking it for granted, that proof of the *first* proposition is proof of the *second*; and from the consideration that, as shown in the statement of his theory, he cannot use the terms production, produce, divine operation, agency, &c. to designate any mode of agency but that of creating. But since the propositions are synonymous, all the arguments he employs to prove *either* of the propositions, may be alleged, with precisely the same conclusiveness, to prove the *other*. If, then, *all his arguments* to prove *either* of them are considered in relation to *one*, as the proposition, “God creates all the holy actions of men,” a refutation of them, in relation to that proposition, will be a refutation of them in regard to *both* those purposes for which he uses them.

In the second place—As he uses the propositions, as appears from the reasons just stated. “God exerts, in all the *other* actions of men, a *direct operation* on their minds;” and, “God *creates* all the *other* actions of men,” as perfectly synonymous: and as thence all the arguments he employs, to

prove either of the propositions, may be alleged, with precisely the same conclusiveness, to prove the other, a refutation of all his arguments to prove either of them, considered in relation to *one*, as the proposition, "God *creates* all the *other* actions of men," will be a refutation of them in regard to both of those purposes for which he employs them.

But in the third place, he does not, as already remarked, employ any arguments to prove the proposition, "God creates all the *other* actions of men," which he either does not, or might not, with equal conclusiveness, use to prove the proposition, "God creates all the *holy* actions of men." For the only consideration employed exclusively to prove the former, is the adaptation of the theory to account for the fall of Adam; and if *that* adaptation of the theory prove the truth of *that* proposition, its equal adaptation to account for the renovation and sanctification of saints, may be alleged, with equal conclusiveness, to prove the truth of the *other* proposition. Nor does he, as already observed, employ any arguments to prove the proposition, "God creates all the *holy* actions of men," which he either does not, or might not, with equal conclusiveness, use to prove the

proposition, "God creates all the *other* actions of men." For the three first and the sixth arguments, viz. that from the dependence of men; that from passages asserting God's government of men: that from passages teaching their dependence; and that from the possibility of God's creating holy actions, are all employed to prove both propositions, and with equal conclusiveness; as they rest on ground which is common to both kinds of actions, and if demonstrative of one of the propositions, *must* be so of the other.

The seventh is employed exclusively to sustain the proposition, "God creates all the *other* actions of men." The fourth and fifth are the only arguments employed exclusively to prove that God creates all the *holy* actions of men. And the Doctor might have used them with equal conclusiveness to prove the other proposition. For in his fourth argument, from passages of Scripture, teaching that the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies the hearts of men, the manner in which he obtains the inference, that God *creates* all their holy actions, is, by the assumption, that the *only way* in which He can bring the *holy* actions of men into existence, is that of *creating* them. His argument de-

pende entirely on that assumption. Since if there be any *other way* in which God may bring their holy actions into existence, passages merely proving that He *brings* them into existence, will not prove that the *mode* of His bringing them into existence is *that of creation*.

But that assumption rests on the position in his argument from the dependence of creatures, that the only way in which *any* of their actions can come into existence, is that of *being created* by God. There is no other possible way in which he can obtain the inference from those passages. His argument, then, from those passages, to prove that all the *holy* actions of men are created, is an inference from the position that *all* the actions of men are created; or he infers, that God creates the *holy* actions of men, because He creates *all* their actions. It takes the thing as granted which it is employed to prove, and is, therefore, without force, and cannot be employed with any more conclusiveness to prove *that*, than to prove the proposition, that all the *other actions* of men are *created*.

The same is true of the fifth argument, from the prayers of good men. For if their prayers for divine assistance presuppose



their need of having their *holy* actions *created*, it must be, as before, on the ground that the *only way* in which God can bring their holy actions into existence, is by *creating them*: and that position also rests on the ground, that the *only way* in which *any* of the actions of men can come into existence, is that of being *created* by God. His argument, then, to prove that all the *holy* actions of men are created, is an inference from the position, that *all* the actions of men are created; and as it takes the thing to be proved for granted, is without force, and cannot be employed with any more propriety to prove *that*, than the proposition, that *all the other actions* of men are *created*. Thus the inference in each case presupposes the truth of the second proposition. It is entirely immaterial, as it respects the force and propriety of these two arguments, whether the position from which they are drawn,—that there is no other way in which the actions of men can come into existence than that of their being created,—is true or not. For if it be true, no arguments derived from its truth to prove its truth, or any part of it, can have any force or propriety. If it be not true, no arguments to prove it to be true, or any part of it to be true, found-

ed on the assumption that it *is* true, can have any force or propriety.

Whatever then gives propriety or conclusiveness to any of the arguments the Doctor uses to sustain either of the propositions, "God creates all the *holy* actions of men," and "God creates all the *other actions* of men," gives them equal propriety and conclusiveness to sustain the *other* proposition.

But if they are as entirely proper and conclusive to sustain one of those propositions as the other, then they are as entirely proper and conclusive to sustain the *one* proposition including those two propositions, "God creates *all* the actions of men," as they are to sustain either of those two propositions. For the two propositions, "God creates all the *holy*," and "God creates all the *other* actions of men," are precisely equal to the single proposition, "God creates *all* the actions of men." And thence, if all the Doctor's arguments are precisely as well adapted to prove one of those two propositions as they are the other, they are as well adapted to prove the single proposition uniting the two, as they are to prove either of the two. In metaphysics, as in mathematics, things equal to the same thing are equal to one another.

As all the Doctor's arguments hold, in respect to propriety and conclusiveness, precisely the same relation to any one part of the proposition, "God creates all the actions of men," as they do to any other part; they must hold the same relation, in respect to propriety and conclusiveness, to the whole of it, as they do to any of its parts.

Thus the two propositions respecting the *holy* actions of men, "God exerts, in all the holy actions of men, a *direct operation* on their minds," and "God *creates* all the holy actions of men," being *synonymous*, are reduced to the proposition, "God *creates* all the holy actions of men:" and the two propositions respecting the *other* actions of men, "God exerts," &c. and "God *creates*," &c. being *synonymous*, are reduced to the proposition, "God creates all the other actions of men." The whole theory is thus reduced to the two propositions, "God creates all the holy actions of men," and "God creates all the *other* actions of men;" and those two propositions, and thence the whole theory, are embraced in the single one,

*God creates all the actions of men.*

Now, therefore, in respect to these, as to the synonymous propositions, since all the arguments, alleged to prove either of the two propositions, of which the theory is made up, are equally applicable and conclusive to prove the single proposition—*God creates all the actions of men*—in which the two former propositions and the whole theory are embodied; it is not necessary, in order to a refutation of the whole theory, to refute them in the *several instances*, in which he employs them to sustain those two propositions *separately*: a refutation of them *once*, considered as employed to sustain the whole theory embodied in the proposition—*God creates all the actions of men*—will be a refutation of them in all the instances in which he employs them to support his theory. We shall consider them as alleged to sustain that proposition, and regard a refutation of them, in respect to that, as a refutation of them in all the instances in which he uses them, to prove the truth of any part of his theory.

We proceed therefore to show, that the Doctor's reasonings in support of that proposition are erroneous.

Hic labor, hoc opus est.

The Doctor's *first* argument to support his theory is founded on the *dependence* of creatures.

It is presented in the following manner: "It is the dictate of right reason, that no created being is capable of acting independently. Universal and absolute dependence goes into the very idea of a creature, because independence is an attribute of the divine nature, which even Omnipotence cannot communicate. And since saints are creatures, and creatures too of an inferior order. they can never act otherwise than under the powerful and unremitting energy of the Supreme Being." Vol. i. p. 203.

"Mankind are creatures, and by the law of nature absolutely dependent upon God. We cannot conceive that even Omnipotence is able to form independent agents, because this would be to endow them with divinity. And since all men are dependent agents, all their motions, exercises, or actions must originate from a divine efficiency. We can no more act, than we can exist, without the constant aid and influence of the Deity. This is the dictate of reason." Vol. ii p. 31.

Hence the inference obviously drawn from these premises: "Men are no more

capable of acting independently of God in one instance than another. If they need any kind or degree of divine agency in doing good, they need precisely the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil. This is the dictate of reason." And in reference to a particular case: "If he produced their bad as well as good volitions, then his agency was concerned in *precisely the same manner* in their wrong as in their right actions." "It is upon this ground, and only upon this ground, that all the actions of men, whether good or evil, may properly be ascribed to God." Vol. ii. p. 46.

"Since mind cannot *act*, any more than matter can *move*, without a divine agency, it is absurd to suppose that men can be left to the freedom of their own will, to act or not to act, independently of divine influence. There must be, therefore, the exercise of divine agency in every human action, without which it is impossible to conceive, that God should govern moral agents, and make mankind act in perfect conformity to his own designs." p. 41.

By "universal and absolute dependence," the Doctor means "universal and absolute" *destitution of power*. This is seen from his inferences from that "absolute

dependence," that mind can no more *act*, than matter can *move*, without a divine agency, to produce its actions; that all the motions, exercises, or actions of men must *originate* from a divine efficiency; and that the constant aid and influence of the Deity are as necessary to enable men to act, as to enable them to exist. For if he does not mean by "absolute and universal *dependence*," an "absolute and universal" destitution of *power*, he cannot infer from that dependence that dependent beings cannot act without a divine efficiency to originate or create their actions: since if they possess *any degree* of power, they possess the *power* of *acting* without a divine efficiency to produce their actions; for power is that by which a being acts or produces effects; and, therefore, the being who possesses any, even the least degree of power, *can act* to that degree without a divine efficiency to produce his actions. And if he does not mean by that dependence an absolute *destitution of power*, he cannot infer from it, that "all the motions, exercises, or actions of men do necessarily originate from a *divine efficiency*." For since, if moral agents possess *any degree* of power, they possess the power of *acting* to some de-

gree; *some* of their motions, exercises, or actions may "*originate*" from that power of acting, and not "from a divine efficiency."

If by "universal and absolute dependence," the Doctor does not mean a total destitution of power, he must mean merely a total inability to act independently of the divine control. But he cannot mean a simple inability of acting independently of a divine control; because he cannot infer, from such a dependence, that all the actions of men must "*originate from a divine efficiency;*" since their taking place under the divine control does not involve their being *originated* by a "*divine efficiency,*" but simply their being governed by a divine agency. Nor can he infer, that men need precisely the same *kind* and *degree* of divine agency in doing evil as in doing good; for if all the agency necessary is merely a controlling agency, the kind and degree necessary in the one case may be very different from those necessary in the other.

Nor can he infer, that the constant aid and influence of the Deity are as necessary to enable men to act, as they are to continue them in *existence*: for it is the power of the Deity only that continues them in ex-



istence, and if His aid and influence are as necessary to their acting as to their existing, His power only must produce their actions. But if He exerts over them only a controlling agency in their actions, it is not His power, but theirs, which produces their actions; and therefore His aid and influence are not as necessary to their acting, as to their existing.

By "universal and absolute dependence," therefore, he cannot mean a mere inability to act with an entire exemption from a divine control, but a total destitution of all power whatever to act. From such a dependence he may justly draw the conclusion, that all the actions of men must originate from a divine *efficiency*; and that the same kind of agency is necessary in all cases.

The position, then, from which he argues is, that creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of power. Men then, he infers, cannot act without a divine influence to create their actions. All their motions, exercises, or actions, therefore, must originate from a divine efficiency, or, in the language of the proposition, are created by God.

The validity of his argument depends on the validity of his position. If his po-

sition is proved to be true, his conclusion is irrefragable, and his theory is established. If his position is not proved to be true, and can be proved to be false, his conclusion is "lame and impotent;" and his theory, with its seven pillars, for the other six, like an inverted cone, rest entirely on this, is subverted.

What then is the proof alleged by the Doctor of the truth of that position? It is presented in the following quotations.—

"Universal and absolute dependence goes into the very idea of a creature, because independence is an attribute of the divine nature, which even Omnipotence cannot communicate. Vol. i. p. 203.

"We cannot conceive that even Omnipotence is able to form independent agents, because this would be to endow them with divinity." Vol. ii. p. 31.

"It is absurd to suppose, that men can be left to the freedom of their own will to act, or not to act, independently of a divine influence. There must be the exercise of divine agency in every human action, without which it is impossible to conceive, that God should govern moral agents, and make mankind act in perfect conformity to his own designs." p. 41.

By "independence" the Doctor, as ap-

pears above, does not mean, the power of acting without absolute exemption from all control by God, but the power of acting of one's self, without another's power creating the action, not having any consideration whether or not that power of acting is controlled by God. By being "independent," is meant the possession within one's self of power to act; and by "acting independently," is meant, exerting actions by power belonging to one's self, instead of having those actions created by the power of some other being.

This is manifest, from his use of the language, "absolute dependence," to denote, as shown above, an absolute destitution of power to *act*; and from the consideration, that the object of the argument is to prove, that men do not *possess* the *power* of *acting*, without a *divine influence* to create their actions. If, by independence, he means any thing else than the power of acting of one's self, without another's power to create the action, it is not at all pertinent to the thing in question. In saying, that "independence is an attribute of the divine nature, which even Omnipotence cannot communicate;" and that, "to form independent agents, would be to endow them with divinity," he mani-

festly means, that to communicate independence, that is, the *power of acting* of one's self, without another's power to create the action, is to communicate *omnipotence*; for he calls it "an attribute of the divine nature," and "divinity." But there is no degree of power but omnipotence, that is an attribute of the divine nature, and is divinity. And he says, on the supposition that men were made capable of acting without a divine influence to create their actions, it is impossible to conceive that God should govern them, and make them act in perfect conformity to his designs. But if, in being made capable of acting without a divine influence to create the action, only a *limited* degree of power were communicated, it is *not* impossible to conceive, that God, who is omnipotent, should govern men, and make them act in perfect conformity to His designs. But, on the other hand, it is impossible to conceive that omnipotence should not, if disposed, govern a limited degree of power in perfect conformity to its designs.

That this exhibition of the Doctor's views, respecting dependence and independence, is correct, is apparent from a variety of other considerations, The

whole object of his argument is, to prove a necessity of a divine influence to create all the actions of men. Now the pertinency of his reasoning to prove it from the nature of dependence and independence, depends entirely on his possessing those views of them which we have ascribed to him. For if those are not his views—if he regards the dependence of man as an agent, as consisting simply in his being controlled by God in all his agency, his argument is inconclusive. For it does not follow from that dependence, that God must create all his actions. The argument then is, God governs man in all his agency ;—therefore He creates all his actions. But this is assuming the thing to be demonstrated. Proof that God governs, is no more proof that God creates the actions of man, than it is that He does not create them. The inference, that He creates his actions, cannot be drawn from the fact that He governs them, till it be proved that he cannot, or does not, govern them in any other way. But if the Doctor regarded dependence as consisting in a destitution of power, then his inference follows from his premise : if man is absolutely destitute of power to act, there is a necessity that God should create his actions.

Again: no dependence but that which consists in an absolute destitution of power, can constitute a necessity of a divine influence to *create* the actions of man. If *he* possesses power to exert his actions, there is no need of a *divine power* to exert them; no divine agency is then necessary, except to *control* him in the exertion of his power.

Again; the Doctor regards the dependence of the mind as such, that it cannot *act* any more than matter can *move* without a divine agency. But matter is universally and absolutely destitute of the power of moving itself. If, therefore, mind is dependent for its actions in the same manner as matter is for its motions, then its dependence consists in an "universal and absolute" destitution of power to act. If the Doctor considers the dependence of mind and matter as consisting simply in their being controlled by a divine agency in the exercise of power belonging to themselves, then his conclusion from that dependence, that God must create all the actions of the mind, is, as in the former cases, entirely without force.

If the Doctor meant, by "acting independently," acting by one's own power, we can see how he was led to remark, that

he was unable to conceive that God could govern moral agents: but if, by “acting independently,” he meant acting exempt from all control, we should hardly expect him to inform his readers, that it was impossible to conceive that God should govern moral agents. Who needs to be told, that he cannot conceive of a being as, at the same time, acting independently of all control, and not acting independently of all control?

His exhibition of the divine agency as necessary to *aid, originate, and produce* the actions of men, has no pertinency to the argument, if he regards human dependence as consisting simply in a subjection to the government of God: but it has pertinency, if he regards dependence as consisting in an entire destitution of power to act.

That we have here interpreted his language correctly, is moreover manifest from the fact, that he exhibits precisely the same views of man, and of the origin of his actions, in many other passages. Such are the following:—“There is no occasion for a distinct faculty of will, in order to put forth external actions or internal exercises.” What is the faculty of will, but the faculty of voluntarily exercising

power? "It is God who worketh in men both to will and to do. Moral exercises flow from a divine operation upon the mind of a moral agent, and not from *any natural faculty, principle, or taste, enabling* him to originate his own internal exercises and external actions." Vol. ii. p. 195. What is power but "a natural faculty, enabling" a being "to originate" and exert "his own internal exercises and external actions?" And if man is not absolutely destitute of power, why do all his actions "originate from a divine operation on his mind?" "Our moral exercises are the *production* of the divine power." Vol. i. p. 224.

And furthermore, it is apparent that his views of "independence" are those which we have ascribed to him, because, that which is peculiar to independent action, is exactly the reverse of that which is peculiar to dependent action. As thence dependence, as an agent, according to the Doctor, consists in a total destitution of power to act, independence, as an agent, being the reverse of that, must consist in possessing the power of acting. To make it consist in any thing beside that, is to make it something which is not opposed to dependence, and which, therefore, is not independence.



And thence as, according to the Doctor, independence, as an agent, consists in possessing the power of acting; if independence, that is, the power of acting, is a divine attribute, and divinity, it must be Almighty power; since the attribute of power in God is omnipotence.

Such, then, being the Doctor's meaning in those passages, the reason he assigns to prove the truth of his position, "that creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of the power of acting," is, that to communicate to beings the power of *acting of themselves*, without divine power to create their actions, would be to communicate *omnipotence*.

The validity of his position depends on the validity of the reason he assigns to sustain it. If the reason is shown to be false, the position will be left without proof, and the conclusion drawn from it, in support of the theory, subverted.

Power is that by which a being acts, and produces effects. A being, then, who possesses any power at all, possesses power to *act* so far without his actions being created by another's power. The Doctor, then, in holding that God cannot communicate to a being the power of acting of himself, unless He communicates *omnipotence*, holds, that God cannot com-

communicate *any power* at all, without communicating omnipotence. For if he cannot communicate any power at all to a being, without communicating to that being power to act of himself; and if He cannot communicate power to act of himself, without communicating omnipotence, then He cannot communicate any power at all without communicating omnipotence.

His proof, therefore, of the position—Creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of power,—resolves itself into the proposition—God cannot communicate any power at all without communicating omnipotence.

In refutation of this proposition, I allege the consideration—

In the *first* place—That it is a gratuitous assumption.

It is not a self-evident proposition. It cannot be self-evident, unless the word power be used synonymously with omnipotence. The proposition then would be—God cannot communicate omnipotence without communicating omnipotence. But the word power is not used synonymously with omnipotence; for the thing in question is, whether God may not communi-

cate power, which is not omnipotence; that is, whether power may not be something which is not omnipotence. The proposition, therefore, is not a self-evident one, and cannot be made a self-evident one by even omnipotence itself; since it involves a contradiction to suppose, that words used in a different signification in a given case, should not be used in a different but similar signification in that case. And since the proposition is not self-evident, if it be sustained, it must be by evidence external to itself. The Doctor, however, has not alleged any evidence of its truth. He has only presented his naked declaration, and left us to believe it simply on his authority. But he makes rather too large a demand on our credulity, in calling us to believe, merely on his authority, a proposition so contradictory to our ordinary and natural conceptions, and one upon which the validity of his argument entirely depends, and the validity also of all his other arguments to support the theory, (for, as will hereafter be shown, their validity depends on the validity of his first argument); and thence the truth of his theory itself.

In the *second* place—There is no medium by which it is possible to prove that the proposition is true. This, indeed,

might be inferred from the Doctor's not attempting its proof; since, had its proof been practicable, it is not to be conjectured that he would have left it unattempted, and thereby exposed himself to the charge of incapacity to discover it; or of presumption, in resting his whole theory on the basis of his own authority, in preference to that of indubitable proof. It is not a dictate of *reason*, that God cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence. If it were, it must be on the ground of the *nature* of power: but if there be any thing in the nature of power, which renders it impossible that it should be communicated without communicating omnipotence, it must be, that power is, in its nature, omnipotence; or, that from its nature, there cannot be any degree in it but omnipotence. But it is not a dictate of reason, that power is in its nature omnipotence, any more than it is a dictate of reason, that reason is *infinite* reason, affection *infinite* affection, existence *infinite* existence: and therefore it is not more a dictate of reason, that God cannot communicate power without communicating omnipotence, than it is, that He cannot communicate reason, without communicating infinite reason—that He cannot communi-

cate affection, without communicating infinite affection—that He cannot communicate existence, without communicating infinite existence.

We defy the Doctor, and all the metaphysicians on earth, to prove that reason dictates, that there may not be *degrees* in power as well as in understanding, affection, and existence. As far as reason teaches,\* any thing respecting the nature of power, understanding, affection, and existence, it teaches, that there may be degrees in one of them as well as another.

On the other hand, it dictates at least a probability, that there may be degrees in power: for as it does not furnish any ground to conclude, that there may not be degrees of power, as well as of existence, understanding, and affection; since there are degrees of existence, understanding, and affection, there is at least a probability that there may be also of power.

If, then, it is not a dictate of reason that there cannot be degrees in power, it is not a dictate of reason that God cannot communicate power without communicating omnipotence.

It is not a dictate of *common sense*, that God cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence. If it be a dictate of common sense in dis-

inction from reason, it must be so on the ground that the existence of power that is not omnipotent, is inconsistent with something of which we are conscious, or which we experience or observe. But there is nothing of which we are *conscious*, that dictates the conclusion, that no power but omnipotence can exist. For we are conscious of nothing but the sensations, affections, and actions of our bodies and minds; and they do not dictate, that no power but omnipotence can exist, any more than they dictate, that no existence but that which is *infinite* can exist.

Nor is it dictated by any thing which we *experience* or *observe*. Were it dictated by experience or observation, it must be on the ground, that we do not experience or observe any *exertions* of power which are not omnipotent. But that is not the fact. We do experience exertions of power which is limited. The power which is only adequate to wield a quill, is not adequate to raise the Andes to the moon. It is limited to the production of only small effects. In like manner, we observe that the power of others, by which they produce effects, is limited to the production only of effects of the same kind as those we are able to produce. We

never see the power of creatures surpass very narrow limits. Common sense, therefore, does not dictate, that no power can exist but what is omnipotence: but it dictates, that power does exist, which is *limited in degree*.

Nor can it be proved by *testimony*, that God cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence.

We have indeed the testimony of the Doctor in support of the position; but he will please to forgive our fastidiousness, if we demur in regard to his testimony, so far as to consider the proposition *not proved*, till either angels or God are found to yield him assistance.

Since neither reason nor common sense furnish any evidence in favour of the proposition, men are incompetent to furnish testimony in support of it.

What the testimony of the *angels*, holy and unholy, on that subject would be, could it be obtained, it is needless to suppose. How much soever they may, with each other, have

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“reason’d high  
Of providence, foreknowledge, will, and fate—  
Fixt fate, freewill, foreknowledge absolute,”

or on this subject, they have never expressed their views respecting it to men.

And, finally, *God* has never testified that He cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence. No such testimony, either direct or implied, is contained in the sacred volume. If it exists there, the Doctor has been guilty of a great oversight, in not detecting it, or else of great presumption, in preferring his own testimony to support the proposition. On the other hand, God treats men in all the requisitions, rewards, and punishments of His moral government, as though they possessed *only limited power*, or as though the power, by which they produced effects, was limited: and also in His providence, by constituting a necessity of only limited power to accomplish the effects men are designed to accomplish. And all the language of the Scriptures concurs with experience and observation in producing the conviction, that the power by which men produce effects is limited in degree. The testimony of God, therefore, on the subject, is against the proposition, not in its favour. "And let God be true, and every man a liar."

But if it is neither self-evident, nor a dictate of reason, nor of common sense,



nor is proved by testimony, that God cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence, then the proposition *cannot be proved to be true*; for there is no other medium by which it can be proved to be true, than either that of self-evidence, of reason, of common sense, or testimony.

And if, as has been shown, it is the dictate of reason and common sense, and is the testimony of God, that He *can* and does communicate power, without communicating omnipotence, then the proposition *is proved to be false*.

Thus the proposition, alleged by the Doctor to sustain the position, that creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of power, is not only a gratuitous assumption, and incapable of being proved to be true, but is proved to be untrue. It does not yield any support therefore to the position it is employed to sustain.—That position, thus left unsupported, becomes a gratuitous assumption; and the conclusion drawn from it, viz. that God creates all the actions of men, is equally unsustained. The process, by which the Doctor arrived at that conclusion, seems to have been this:—Power is in its nature

omnipotence; God therefore cannot communicate any power at all, without communicating omnipotence. Creatures then, not being omnipotent, do not possess any power at all: God therefore creates all the actions of men.

The second and third steps are, as we have shown, contained in his argument. The second must be, as before remarked, if it be an inference from any thing, an inference from the first.

Now since it has been shown, that the first step is not only a gratuitous assumption, and incapable of proof, but is false; and likewise, that the second step is not only a gratuitous assumption, and incapable of proof, but is also false; therefore the conclusion drawn from it, viz. that creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of power, is shown to be erroneous; and thence also the inference from that conclusion, that God creates all the actions of men.

No farther refutation of the Doctor's position, therefore, unsupported as he has left it, is necessary in order to invalidate his conclusion from it in support of his theory; for since the position is left utterly destitute of proof, the conclusion from that position is also left equally des-

titute of proof, and no ground is presented for the inference of the theory from that conclusion. However, though “we cannot conceive that even Omnipotence is able” to make the Doctor’s argument, unsupported as he has left it, a good one; yet it may be worth consideration, whether or not any valid arguments, unalleged by the Doctor, can be advanced to sustain his position, that creatures are universally and absolutely destitute of power, from which he deduces his theory.

This proposition is essentially different from the other, from which he inferred it. *That* proposition simply denied God’s ability to communicate a *limited degree* of power; *this* merely denies that He *has* communicated *any power* to men. Though that proposition is entirely false, yet this may, notwithstanding, although the Doctor has neglected to prove it, be true.

In proof then, that the proposition—man is universally and absolutely destitute of power—is incapable of being demonstrated to be true by any argumentation whatever, we allege, in the first place, the consideration, that *reason* does not yield it any support, but furnishes proofs of its falsehood.

If reason could furnish a demonstration of its truth, it would be either by deducing it directly from some other known, indubitable truth, or by proving its converse to be inconsistent with some known, indubitable truth. If there is any truth within the compass of our knowledge, from which the proposition can be demonstratively deduced as a conclusion, it must be one which respects either God, or man, or both. But there is no such known truth respecting either. It is a known truth, that man is "absolutely dependent" on God. But it cannot be demonstrated from that, that man is absolutely and universally destitute of power, unless it be proved, that he must be universally and absolutely destitute of power, in order to be dependent.

To determine whether or not men must be absolutely destitute of power, in order to be dependent, let us ascertain what dependence is.

A being is "absolutely dependent" on God, who is entirely dependent on Him for existence, and the mode of exercising his power; or whose existence, and the mode in which he exercises his power, are entirely the consequence of God's power, and not his own.

As an existence simply, he is “absolutely dependent” on God, if it is entirely by the power of God, and not by his own, that he exists. It being entirely by the power of God that he began and continues to exist, all his powers and qualities, as an existence, are entirely the effects of God’s power. His dependence, therefore, as an existence, on God, is as absolute as it can be.

And as an agent, he is “absolutely dependent” on God, if he is absolutely dependent on Him for the modes in which he exercises his power.

If it is entirely the effect of God’s exerting on him such an agency as he does, that he exercises his power in the mode he does; then he is as dependent as he can be in that respect. But these are the only respects in which a being can be dependent. For his existence, and the powers and qualities belonging to him as an existence, and his exercises of those powers, are all you can predicate of him: and if he is entirely dependent on God for all you can predicate of him, he is as “absolutely dependent” as he can be.

Let us then see whether a being, thus dependent, must be universally and absolutely destitute of power.

In the first place, it does not follow from his absolute dependence, as an *existence*, that he is universally and absolutely destitute of power. His power is a part of that, which belongs to his constitution as an existence, as much as any other property, and as much as existence itself. It no more follows, from his dependence on God as an existence, that he is absolutely destitute of power, than it does, that he is absolutely destitute of existence itself. It follows, that he is absolutely destitute of the power of *self-existence*, but not, that he is destitute of *all* power. If it does, it must be on the ground, that God cannot *preserve* power in existence. But it has been shown; that there is no proof that God cannot *communicate* power to a being, but proof that He can: but if God can communicate power to a being, he can also *preserve* that power in existence. As no reason can be shown why He cannot communicate power, as well as existence, understanding, affection, or any thing else; so no reason can be shown why He cannot *preserve* power in existence, as well as existence, understanding, affection, or any thing else. It follows from his dependence, as an existence, for all that pertains to his constitu-

tion as an existence, that he is “absolutely dependent” for his power, just as he is for every thing else, not that he is absolutely *destitute* of power.

In the next place, it does not follow from his absolute dependence as an *agent*, that he is absolutely destitute of power. For his dependence as an agent, is not a dependence for the *existence* of any thing, which makes up his constitution, as an existence, but only for the *mode* in which he *exercises* his power; that is, that he exercises it in exerting one train of actions, and not any another. Because it is the consequence of God’s agency, that he exercises his power in exerting a given series of actions, and not any other, it no more follows that he is absolutely destitute of power, than because it is the consequence of God’s power, that he exists in the mode he does, and not in any other mode, it follows that he is absolutely destitute of existence.

It does not follow then, that a being thus dependent must be absolutely destitute of power.

But is it possible that a being should be dependent in this manner?

In the first place, as an *existence* he may and must be dependent in this manner. He must either be thus dependent for existence, or else be self-existent; but he is not self-existent: since that which is self-existent does not owe its existence to any being external to itself; but *the* being in question owes his existence to God.— and a self-existent being can never cease to exist, as the cause of his existence cannot possibly be destroyed; but *the* being in question can be annihilated; for God's omnipotence can annihilate any thing which it creates. As an existence, therefore, he may and must be “absolutely dependent” on God for his existence, and his nature as an existence.

In the next place, he may also, as an *agent*, be dependent on God for the mode in which he exercises his power. To this, three things only are requisite, 1st. That his constitution be such, that the exercise of his power shall take place only under the influence of motives; 2d. That it be such, that God can determine what degree of influence any object, if presented to his mind as a motive, shall exert; and 3d. That it be such, that God can determine what objects shall be pre-



sented to his mind as motives. For if his constitution be such, that he cannot exert his power, except under the influence of motives, then the foundation is laid, by that constitution, of a certainty that he will never exercise his power, except when motives are presented to his mind; and if his constitution be such, that God can determine what degree of influence any object, if presented as a motive, shall exert, then he will be dependent on God for the influence which motives exert: and if his constitution be such, that God can determine what motives shall be presented to his mind, then he will be dependent on God for the mode in which he exercises his power. Since, if the mode of his exercising his power depend on the influence of the motives presented to him, and God determine what motives are presented to him, and their influence, then the mode, in which he exercises his power, will be entirely determined by God.

Can God then form a being with such a constitution?

In the first place, He can form a being with such a constitution, that the exercise of his power shall always take place under the influence of motives; for man is

such a being. He never exercises his power in mental operations, or in external actions, but under the influence of motives. If any effects take place in his mind or body, which do not take place under the influence of motives before his mind, they are not the effects of the exercise of *his* power, but of some other being's. Since then man is such a being, God can form a being with such a constitution, that the exercise of his power shall always take place under the influence of motives.

In the next place—God can form a being of such a constitution, that He can determine what degree of influence **any** object, if presented as a motive to the being, shall exert; for man is such a being.

It is a fact, that every motive under whose influence he acts, exerts on him a *specific degree* of influence; and there is a *cause* that it possesses that precise degree of influence.

It is owing to the nature of his constitution that he is susceptible of influence from motives. It is owing to the nature of his constitution that he is capable of pleasure and pain; and that is the ground of his being susceptible of influence from motives. Were his constitution like that of matter, he would be no more suscepti-

ble of influence from motives, than a mirror is from the image formed in it.

It is owing to the nature of his constitution likewise, that he is capable of the kinds of pleasure and pain of which he is susceptible; and thence, that those kinds of things are motives, which are capable of affording him those kinds of pleasure and pain.

But the nature of his constitution, by which he is capable of pleasure and pain, and thence susceptible of influence from motives, and by which he is capable of those kinds and modes of pleasure and pain, as those of the appetites, affections, and passions of which he is capable, and thence is susceptible of influence from those kinds of things which are capable of affording those kinds of pleasure and pain.—is not the cause that every particular motive under whose influence he acts, possesses that specific degree of influence over him which it does possess.

It is his *knowledge* or *estimation* of the *capacity* of an object, which is a motive, to *afford pleasure or pain*, that is the *cause* that that motive possesses that precise degree of influence which it does possess. The degree of influence a motive possesses, depends on the degree of pleasure or

pain it is regarded as capable of affording. That motive possesses the greatest influence, which is esteemed capable of affording the greatest quantity of pleasure or pain; that motive possesses a less influence, which is considered as capable of affording only a less quantity; and that motive possesses the least, which is regarded as capable of affording only the least quantity.

It is the nature of an object, or its capacity to afford pleasure or pain, that constitutes it a good or evil; and it is his knowledge or estimation of that capacity, that is the cause of its possessing the influence it does possess over him. If the capacity of an object be *known*, it is his knowledge of that capacity:—if its capacity be *not known*, it is his *judgment* respecting its capacity, that gives it that specific degree of influence it possesses. The truth of these remarks every mind will recognise.

What all the causes are of his forming that judgment which he does, respecting the capacity of an object whose capacity is *not known*, we may be unable to enumerate. They may be the resemblance or dissimilarity of that object to some other object whose capacity is known,

the testimony of others, and, for aught we know, the influence of the Holy Spirit, or of the adversary.

Now, since his knowledge or estimation of the capacity of an object, which is a motive, to afford pleasure or pain, is the cause that that motive possesses that precise degree of influence over him it does possess, it is apparent that God may determine what degree of influence any object, if presented to his mind as a motive, shall possess. For his judgment respecting the capacity of an object is an *effect*; and that effect, like every other, must have had a *cause*; and that cause must have constituted, previously to the existence of the effect, a ground of *certainty*, that the effect should exist at the time and in the circumstances in which it does exist, just as any other cause constitutes a ground of certainty, previously to its producing its effect, that its effect shall exist at the time and in the circumstances in which it does exist.

Now the cause\* of that judgment, and

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\* Cause here does not mean the *efficient* cause—the cause whose *power* exerts the judgment: for as the judgment is the act of the being, he is the efficient cause of the act; it is his power by which the act is exerted: but the “cause” in question is the occasional cause of the judgment: that is, the cause which leads the being voluntarily to exert the judgment; by his own power.

ground of previous certainty that it should exist, may and must be constituted by God. For the immediate cause of that judgment must be, either the being's constitution, his previous acts, the agency of some other being on him, or part or all of those combined together.

If his constitution were the cause of that judgment, then as God formed that constitution, He formed the cause of that judgment, and the ground of certainty previously to its production, that that judgment should, as an effect, be produced by that cause. If the cause were the agency of God himself, then He was of course the cause of that judgment.

If the cause were the agency of any other being, as the adversary; then, as his agency is controlled by God, God must have constituted his agency that cause, and made it a ground of certainty previously to its producing its effect, that it should produce that judgment as its effect.

If the cause were his own previous acts—then, as those acts also were *effects*, they must have had a cause, and a ground of certainty, previously to their existence, that they should exist, and be the cause of that judgment—and the cause of those

previous acts must have been either his constitution, the agency of some other being, his own previous acts, or some or all of them combined.

If his own previous acts were the cause in question, then those acts also being *effects*, must have likewise had a cause, and ground of previous certainty that they should exist, and be the cause of those acts which are the cause in question; and so of every step in the series of causes of the cause of that judgment, till you ascend to the first act, which was a cause in the series. That act being also an effect, must have had a cause; and that cause must have been either his constitution, or the agency of some other being, or both combined. If his constitution were the sole cause, then, as before, God the former of that constitution, formed that cause; and likewise if the agency of God were the cause of that act. If the agency of the adversary were the cause of that act, then God, as before shown, must have constituted that agency the cause of that act. And if, whether his constitution, the agency of God himself, or the agency of the adversary, were the cause of that act, *God* must have constituted that cause; then, if either of those

two, or if the three united, were the cause of that act. God must also have constituted that cause, and made it a ground of certainty, previously to the existence of its effect, that that act should exist as its effect.

Now, since the first cause in the series was a ground of infallible certainty that the second should exist; and the second was a ground of infallible certainty that the third should exist; and so of every cause in the series till you descend to the last, which was the cause of the judgment; God, in constituting the first cause, viz. the cause of the first act that was a cause, constituted the cause of the last cause in the series, viz. that which produced the judgment, and made it a ground of certainty that that last cause should exist at the time and in the circumstances in which it does exist. And if, whether his constitution, the agency of some other being, or his own previous acts, were the cause of that judgment, *God*, as shown, must have constituted that cause; then, if any number, or all of these *united*, were the cause of that judgment, God must also have constituted that cause.

Since, then, it is thus demonstrable that God may and must constitute the cause



of that judgment, it is demonstrable, that He may and must determine what degree of influence the object which the judgment respects, shall as a motive possess. For since the degree of influence possessed by the object as a motive, is determined entirely by the judgment respecting the capacity of that object to afford pleasure or pain; and since that judgment is determined entirely by its cause; therefore the degree of influence possessed by the motive is determined entirely by the cause of that judgment. But since the existence and nature of the cause of that judgment, as has been demonstrated, may and must be determined entirely by God, therefore the *degree of influence* possessed by the motive, may and must be determined entirely by God.

God, then, can form a being of such a constitution, that He can determine what degree of influence an object, if presented as a motive, shall possess; for man is such a being. And if He can determine what degree of influence *one* object shall possess, then He can determine what degree of influence *any* object, if presented as a motive, shall possess.

And in the last place—God is able to

determine what motives shall be presented to his mind: for He does determine what motives are presented to the mind of man. This the Doctor holds; this all Calvinists hold; and all others who believe with the Psalmist, that "He does whatever he pleases in heaven, and in earth, and in the seas, and in all deep places;" and with Nebuchadnezzar, that "He doth according to his will, in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" and that "none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" If God's providence is "His most holy, wise, and powerful preserving and governing all his creatures, and all their actions," then He must and does determine what motives are or shall be presented to the mind of man.

The existence of the first motives before his mind, concerning which he exerted a volition, is an effect, and, like all other effects, had a specific cause. That cause, since he had not exerted any previous act, must have been, either his constitution, or the agency of some other being. If it were his constitution, then God, in creating that constitution such, that it should be a cause of that effect, formed a ground of infallible certainty that that

effect should exist—that is, determined the existence of that motive before his mind, at the time and in the circumstances in which it did exist. If God's direct agency were the cause of its existence, then God determined its existence at the time and in the circumstances in which it did exist; and if the agency of any other being was the cause of its existence, then, since God's agency, either directly or indirectly, as before remarked, constituted a ground of certainty that that being should exert that agency, He determined indirectly the existence of the motive as its effect, at the time and in the circumstances in which it did exist. God, then, is able to determine what motives shall be presented to a being possessing such a constitution as the one in question: for man is such a being; and God does determine what motives are presented to his mind.

Now these three things, viz. that a being's constitution be such, that the exercise of his power shall take place only under the influence of motives; that his constitution be also such, that God can determine what degree of influence any object presented as a motive shall possess; and, that his constitution be more-

over such, that God can determine what motives shall be presented to his mind; these three things are all that are requisite, in order that that being may, as an *agent*, be “absolutely dependent” on God for the *mode* in which he exercises his power.

For, in the *first* place, his constitution being such, that the exercise of his power can take place only under the influence of motives, he will be entirely dependent on the influence of motives for the exercise of his power at all in any mode whatever.

In the *second* place, his constitution being such, that God is able to determine what degree of influence any object presented as a motive shall possess, he will be entirely dependent on God for the degree of influence exerted on him by every motive presented to his mind.

And, in the *third* place, his constitution being such, that God can determine what motives shall be presented to his mind, he will be dependent on God for the *mode* in which he exercises his power.

The *mode* in which he exerts his power, depends on the *relative degree* of the influence exerted on him by the several motives under whose influence he exercises his power. He will exercise his power in

that mode to which he is influenced, by those motives which exert on him the greatest degree of influence. His constitution, then, being such, that God can determine, in any given case, what motives shall be presented to his mind, God, by presenting those motives, can determine what degree of influence shall be exerted on him to exercise his power in *any mode whatever*; and, therefore, to what mode of exercise of his power he shall be excited by the *strongest* influence.

But, since he will exercise his power in that mode to which he is excited by the strongest influence; if it be determined by God to what mode of exercising his power he shall be excited by the strongest influence, then he will be entirely dependent on God for the mode in which he exercises his power.

The *magnitude* of the effects produced by his power, will depend on the *quantity* of power with which he is endowed. God, therefore, in endowing him with that quantity of power which he possesses, will determine the magnitude of the effects produced by the exertions of his power.

God, then, is able to form a being of such a constitution, that the exercise of his power shall take place only under the

influence of motives ; that He can determine what degree of influence every motive shall possess ; and that He can determine what motives shall be presented to his mind : for man is such a being.

And, since a being, possessing such a constitution, will be entirely dependent on God for the mode in which he exercises his power. God can form a being of such a constitution, that he shall be entirely dependent on Him for the mode in which he exercises his power.

God, then, as has been shown, can form a being of such a constitution, that as an *existence*, he shall be “absolutely dependent” on God for his existence, and all the powers and qualities that make up his existence : and that as an *agent*, he shall be “absolutely dependent” on God for the mode in which he exercises his power.

It has been also shown, that it does not follow, that a being thus dependent on God as an existence and an agent, is absolutely destitute of power. *Therefore* it has been shown, that it does not follow, from man’s being “absolutely dependent” on God, that he is universally and absolutely destitute of power.

From the known truth then, man is “absolutely dependent” on God, it can-

not be demonstrated that he is universally and absolutely destitute of power.

Again; it is a known truth, that the infinitely wise God has formed and governs man in the manner that yields Him the largest tribute of glory; but it cannot be demonstrated from that, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power.

God is glorified by the display of his attributes. If, then, it follows from the fact, that God has formed and governs man in the manner that yields Him the largest tribute of glory, that man is destitute of power, it must be on the ground that his creation and government, if absolutely destitute of power, would involve a larger exhibition of the divine attributes than his creation and government, if endowed with power. But his creation and government, if destitute of power, would not involve so large a display of the divine attributes, as his creation and government, if endowed with power.

In the first place, his *creation*, if endowed with power, would involve a larger exhibition of the divine attributes than if absolutely destitute of power.

For since, if endowed with power, all that belonged to his constitution, apart

from his power, would exactly resemble his whole constitution, if absolutely destitute of power; as large a display of the divine attributes would be made in creating what belonged to his constitution, apart from his power, as in creating the *whole*, if destitute of power. A larger display of them, therefore, would be made in creating his *whole* constitution, if endowed with power, than in creating the *whole*, if destitute of power. For the creation of his *power* would manifest the divine attributes, as far as we can judge, at least as much as the creation of his understanding, affections, or any other part of his constitution. The power of God would, as far as we can see, be as luminously displayed; and the wisdom of God, in adapting the degree of power, and the mode of its exertion, to the other parts of the constitution, would be as conspicuously exhibited, as in adapting the understanding or affections to the other parts of the constitution.

In the next place, his *government* would involve a larger exhibition of the divine attributes, if endowed with power, than if absolutely destitute of power.

The power of God would, in our apprehension, be more illustriously display-



ed in directing the vast and complicated means of a providential government, so as to control the power of man in all its exertions, and bring all his actions into existence, conformably to His own design, than in simply creating all those actions. And the contrivance and direction of the system of means such a providential government would involve, would present a boundless theatre for *diversified* manifestations of God's wisdom. But its display would be restricted to comparatively narrow limits, were all the actions of men brought into existence by God's creative power; as that would involve only an infinite repetition of the *same* exhibition of His wisdom.

Since, then, the creation and government of man, if absolutely destitute of power, would involve a less display of the divine attributes than if endowed with power; the fact, that God has formed and governs man in the manner that yields Him the largest tribute of glory, does not present any ground for the inference that he is absolutely destitute of power; but, on the contrary, conducts us to the conclusion, that he is endowed with power.

From neither of these known truths then, respecting God and man, can it be inferred, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power. But there is no other known truth respecting either God or man, from which such a conclusion can be obtained. If it is neither necessary, that he should be universally and absolutely destitute of power, that he may be “absolutely dependent” on God, nor that God may be glorified to the highest degree by his creation and government; then it cannot be necessary on any ground.

*Reason*, therefore, does not yield any support to the proposition, man is universally and absolutely destitute of power, but furnishes proof of its falsehood.

In proof that that proposition is incapable of being demonstrated to be true by any argumentation whatever, we allege, in the next place, the consideration, that *common sense* does not furnish it any support, but concurs with reason in proving its falsehood. Were any evidence afforded by common sense that the proposition is true, it must be something of which we are conscious, or which we experience, or observe.

But our *consciousness* does not afford any evidence of its truth. We are not indeed conscious of possessing power; but it does not thence follow that we are absolutely destitute of it, any more than that, because we are not conscious of our existence, it follows that we are absolutely destitute of existence. We are conscious of nothing but the sensations, affections, and actions of our bodies and minds. Our not being conscious of possessing power, no more proves us destitute of it, than our not being conscious of existence, proves us destitute of that; or our not being conscious of the growth of our bodies, and the circulation of our blood proves, that neither of these effects takes place in our bodies.

Nor does our *experience or observation* afford any evidence that we are absolutely destitute of power. We surely never experience an absolute destitution of it. We find by experience that we are destitute of power to subvert the hills, calm the tempest, and trample on empires; but not that we are destitute of power to think, to converse, and to move. We experience only a limitation of our power, not a total destitution of it. In like manner we observe, that others are incapable

only of producing those stupendous effects which surpass our own power, not that they are totally destitute of power.

No evidence therefore is furnished by common sense, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power

But on the other hand it furnishes proof that he is possessed of power.

It is the natural and universal conviction of mankind, that the power by which their actions are exerted, is their own power, and belongs to their constitution, as much as their actions and their existence are their own. This conviction is as natural and as strong as their conviction is, from the fact, that they act, that they exist; or from the fact, that they perceive external objects, that external objects exist: and no man can escape this conviction, any sooner than he can the conviction, that he exists, and that external objects exist. If any ever arrive at the conclusion that they are absolutely destitute of power, and that their actions are entirely the effects of God's power, it is by a course of reasoning against their natural belief, just as those, who deny their own existence, and that of external objects, advance to those conclusions, by arguing against their natural convictions.

Mankind display this conviction in all their views of their agency.

They exhibit it in all their endeavours to act. A man, who attempts to lift a weight, does it because he believes himself possessed of power to lift it. Take away the belief that he has power, and he will not attempt to raise it.

They display it in all their purposes and promises to act. No man forms the purpose of walking, if convinced that he does not possess power to walk. No man designs to fly. No man promises to be in two places at the same time—to raise the dead—to detain the sun over Mount Gibeon, or the moon over the vale of Ajalon. They purpose and promise to do those things only, which they believe they possess power to do. Every purpose and promise rests on the conviction, that they can execute what they will to execute.

They manifest this conviction in their reliance on the purposes and promises of each other. Take away the conviction, that *they* have power to act, and you will destroy all confidence in *them*, that what they purpose and promise will ever exist. Men never will confide in *each other* to accomplish any thing, if they do not believe

that the power, by which the thing is to be accomplished belongs to *themselves*, but put their confidence entirely in God, to whom the power does belong. They will never confide in themselves to effect any thing, if they do not believe it is to be accomplished by their own, and not by God's power, but will confide entirely in God to accomplish it.

They display this conviction in their views of obligation. It is held as a first principle in morals, that a being must possess natural powers to do an act, in order to be under obligation to do it; that a being is under no obligation to obey a law, requiring a service entirely above his natural power. Take away natural power to love, to believe, to pray, and praise, and men will not regard themselves under any more obligation to do those acts, than those who were miraculously healed of diseases, regarded themselves under obligations to heal themselves in the manner they were healed. The man who loses the power of seeing, feels no obligation to read the Word of God: the man who has become deaf, feels no obligation to hear it: the man who has lost the power of going to the sanctuary, feels no compunction for not entering its

gates. Convince men that the power, by which their actions are produced, is lodged entirely in the hands of God, and not in their own, and you disarm their consciences of power to approve or condemn. They never praise or blame themselves for effects produced in them by another's power.

They exhibit this conviction in all their language respecting the power by which their actions are produced. They ascribe power to themselves and others. They distinguish between effects produced in themselves, by their own power, and by the power of God and other beings. They distinguish the different degrees of power, possessed by different individuals, and by themselves at different periods, as much as they distinguish the differences in their form and mental qualities. Were it not for the conviction, that the power which exerts their actions is their own, and not any other being's, they would no more predicate the power by which their actions are exerted, of themselves, than they predicate the power by which a machine is moved, of the machine itself; or the power by which a thing is created, of the thing itself.

Now this universal and irresistible con-

viction of mankind, that the power, by which their actions are exerted, is their own power; and not God's, as much as their actions and existence are their own, and not God's, must have some cause, and that cause can be no other than their constitution. Now their constitution in giving its testimony, that their power is actually their own as they believe, testifies either in *accordance* with fact, or else in *contradiction* to fact. But their constitution cannot give a testimony contradicting the truth. If it does, they are totally deceived on a subject of more importance than any other, and since God made their constitution, they are deceived by Him.

But God cannot be believed to have thus deceived mankind. No reason can be assigned for His deceiving them at all, and especially on a subject of such boundless consequence to themselves. If they are totally destitute of power, no injury can be conceived to result from their knowing it. It could not affect their responsibility or the mode of their conduct: for their moral obligation, assuredly, cannot be constituted by their ignorance of themselves; and if their actions are created by God, their knowledge of the fact could not prevent His continuing to create them.



And how could God thus deceive men, consistently with His rectitude? Would it be consistent with His truth to work a miracle, to lead men to believe a falsehood? But what would that be doing, but merely placing them in circumstances, in which their constitution forced them to believe a falsehood? Is it any more consistent with His truth, to place them in circumstances in which without a miracle, their constitution forces them to believe what is totally false, than it is to employ a miracle to bring them into such circumstances? Can it be supposed to be more justifiable in God, to employ the arts of deception to accomplish His ends, than it is in men to attain theirs?

How is it consistent with His wisdom? Can it be supposed that His infinite understanding is incompetent to devise means to attain His ends, without deceiving men in what is most momentous to their well being?

But God cannot have thus deceived men; since it would lay a foundation for an entire distrust of all His declarations. If it can be shown, that the universal and irresistible conviction of all mankind, that the power which exerts their actions, is their own, and not any other being's, is

entirely owing to an *illusion* imposed by their constitution, and not to the *fact*, that that power *is* their own; then it cannot be shown, that their belief of any thing else respecting themselves, or God, is not entirely owing to an illusion arising from their constitution. And if it can be proved, that God has deceived them in regard to one point of such consequence, it cannot be shown, that He has not deceived them in regard to every other point.

When therefore we are conducted to the conclusion, that our belief, that the power which exerts our actions is our own, is entirely owing to an illusion; we consign our Bible to the flames—heaven and hell vanish from our eye—we annihilate the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen. We cannot trust the testimony of our senses that we witness a miracle; nor the testimony of our constitution that we exist, and that our actions are our own; unless we can also trust the testimony of our constitution, that the power which exerts our actions is also our own power, and not the power of some other being.

*Common sense*, then, instead of yielding any support to the proposition, that man

is universally and absolutely destitute of power, presents her indubitable testimony, that the power by which man acts, is his own; in the same manner that his understanding, affections, and existence are his own. We cannot discredit her testimony to this any more than to any other fact. If her testimony, that the power by which man acts is his own, is not to be trusted, her testimony, that man is *free* in his agency, that external objects exist, that he himself exists, is not to be credited; we are plunged amid the "dark ilimitable ocean" of skepticism.

In the third place, God, in the volume of His revelation, has given His testimony, in concurrence with that of reason and common sense, that man possesses the power which is exerted in his actions. He no where represents men as universally and absolutely destitute of power. But He treats them as possessing the power of acting, by requiring them to act; by prescribing a mode of action, and prohibiting their acting in any other mode; and by His promising to reward obedience, and threatening to punish disobedience. Were they actually possessed of all the power

by which their actions are produced, we should expect Him to treat them thus. But were they entirely destitute of it, we should no more expect it than we should expect to behold Him imposing moral laws on brutes, and machines, and unorganized matter: for we cannot discern the propriety of His requiring a being absolutely destitute of power, to produce an effect, which cannot be produced except by *His own* power. If God produces all the effects that are produced in the universe, and must produce them, why does He call on other beings to produce them? Why reward some as though for doing, and punish some as though for not doing, if it is impossible for any of them to obey of themselves?

In God's administration as a moral Governor, in which He thus treats men, as possessing the power by which their actions are exerted, we have therefore His testimony to the fact, that they are not universally and absolutely destitute of power, but possess the power by which they act, distinctly from God's power, in the same manner, as they possess existence distinctly from God's existence, and act distinctly from God's acting.

But if neither reason, common sense,

nor Revelation, furnish any support to the proposition, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power; but all unite in proving it to be false; then it cannot be proved to be true, by any argumentation whatever; for there is no other source from which proof of its truth can be derived.

We have, indeed, the authority of the Doctor, against that of reason and common sense; but who will hesitate, that the testimony of common sense and reason is more worthy of credence. We have the authority of the Doctor, as we apprehend it, against the testimony of God; but the "testimony of God is the greater." Since then, as has been shown, neither the reasons alleged by the Doctor, nor any other reasons that can be alleged, prove that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power; and since, as has also been shown, reason, common sense, and revelation, unite their testimony in proving, that man is not universally and absolutely destitute of power; but actually possesses the power by which he acts; therefore, the position of the Doctor, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power, is proved to be wholly gratuitous and without foundation; and

thence his *inference* from it, that men cannot act without a divine agency, to produce their actions, is proved to be totally fallacious and unsound; and therefore his *conclusion* from that *inference*, that God creates all the actions of men, is proved to be a false conclusion.

So much for the Doctor's *first* argument, founded on the dependence of creatures. If our reasonings in refutation of it are conclusive, our work is chiefly accomplished; since, as already remarked, the Doctor in all his subsequent arguments assumes the position, that man is universally and absolutely destitute of power, as true; and their validity depends entirely on the validity of that assumption. Our task therefore is henceforth circumscribed chiefly to the narrow limit of showing, that that assumption being gratuitous and false, his reasonings depending on it, are inconclusive.

His scriptural arguments, as before observed, are not numerically divided; the passages, however, which he employs, present ground for such a division as has been made, and may be most advantageously considered in such an arrangement.

He presents then, as the ground of his

*second* argument to sustain the proposition, God creates all the actions of men, passages of Scripture asserting, that God *governs* mankind.

They are the following:—"The preparations of the heart, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." Vol. i. p. 203. "The king's heart is in the hand of the Lord; as the rivers of water, he turneth it whithersoever he will." P. 386. To these may be added, the passages in which God is said to have sent Joseph into Egypt; to have hardened the hearts of Pharaoh and the Egyptians; to have sent Saul to Samuel; to have commanded Shimei to curse David; to have taken away from Job that of which he was stripped by the Chaldeans and Sabeans; to have sent the king of Assyria against the nation of Israel; to have hardened the hearts and blinded the eyes of the Israelites; to have bruised the Redeemer, and put him to grief. Vol. ii. p. 29, 30, 31, and vol. i. p. 229, 230. To these the Doctor might with equal propriety have added innumerable others, teaching us, that God "doth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth;" that He "governs the nations upon the earth," &c.

Now, what are these and similar passages more than mere declarations, that God *governs* mankind in all their agency? What other truth is conveyed to us by the first passage, than that “the preparation of the heart, and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord;” that is, that God *governs* all the exercises of the heart, and all the language of the tongue? What other truth is conveyed to us by the second, than that, “the king’s heart is in the hand of the Lord, and he turneth it whithersoever he will,” that is, that the king’s heart is under His *control*, and He *governs* all its exercises according to His pleasure? What other truth is presented to us by the declaration that He sent Joseph into Egypt; than that He *governed* Joseph and his brethren, and the Ishmaelites in such a manner that Joseph was conveyed into Egypt in the way in which he was? What other truth are we taught, respecting God’s agency, in the passages declaring, that God hardened the hearts of Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Israelites, than that God *governed* them in such a manner, that their hearts were hard?—and so of the others. Do these passages present us with any intelligence respect-



ing God's agency on mankind, except the mere *fact*, that He *governs* them? Do they utter a whisper respecting the *mode* of His *agency*? We defy the Doctor and all his disciples to advance a single reason to prove, that they teach us any thing respecting the *mode* of God's agency, that shall not disgrace the merest sciolist in Biblical criticism, or in reasoning. They simply exhibit God to us as *governing* all the actions of men; they convey us no information whatever of the *mode* of His agency.

The Doctor's inference from these passages is therefore a mere *petitio principii*.

The proposition these passages are employed to sustain is, God *creates* all the actions of men: but the truth proved by the passages is merely, that God *governs* all the actions of men. The inference of the *mode* in which He governs, from the *fact* that He governs, is obtained by *assuming* the position, that the mode in which He governs all their actions, *must* be that of *creating* all of them; which is taking the thing to be proved as granted. The Doctor seems to have advanced to this conclusion, as in the former argument, by assuming the position, that *man*

is universally and absolutely destitute of power, and thence inferring, that as he cannot act of himself, God must *create* all his actions. The Doctor would have been more obliging to his readers, had he not ventured to take it for granted that they were so destitute of consideration as not to detect the fallacy of such reasoning.

It no more follows from the *fact*, that God *governs* all the actions of men, that He *creates* all their actions; than it follows from the *fact*, that He sent Joseph into Egypt, that He sent him in the same manner that David slung the pebbles, or that Saul threw the javelin, or that Jonathan shot his arrows; or than it follows from the fact, that Solomon built the temple, that he built it entirely with his own hands, and by his own power. Let us exemplify the absurdity of this method of reasoning: The Doctor infers from the *mere existence* of a fact, the *mode* in which that fact came into existence. How will it appear applied to some other class of facts? Let us apply it to that class called motions. Assume the position, then, that the *mode* in which all beings move, is that of *flying*, and allege in proof of it the *fact* that they *move*. Thus, Jacob went to

Padanaram, therefore he *flew* to Padanaram. Joseph's brethren cast him into the pit; therefore he flew into the pit. His brethren drew him out of the pit; therefore he flew out. God sent Jonah to Nineveh; therefore Jonah flew to Nineveh, the incidents of his voyage in the Mediterranean notwithstanding. Paul, having appealed to Cæsar, went from Jerusalem to Rome; therefore he flew to Rome with all the ship's company. Is it any better reasoning to say, God *governs* mankind in all their actions; therefore He *creates* all their actions?

The inference that God governs by *creating* all their actions, cannot be obtained from the mere *fact* that He *governs*, until it is proved, from other sources, that the only *mode* in which He does or can *govern*, is that of *creating*. But the Doctor has not attempted that, except in his first argument; and, as has been shown, did nothing more than, than to beg the position to be proved. He never can prove it, till he is endowed with omniscience. He cannot prove, that the only mode in which God can govern mankind, is that of creating all their actions, till he has discovered all the modes in which God can influence men: and he cannot dis-

cover that, till he has found out the Almighty unto perfection. Until he has proved that there is no other mode in which God may govern, than that of creating, he cannot infer that God creates all the actions of men, from the mere *fact* that He *governs* all their actions, with any more conclusiveness, than he can infer any other proposition the English language can express. His premise and his conclusion lie further apart than “thrice from the centre to the utmost pole.”

He presents, as the basis of his *third argument*, passages of Scripture respecting the *dependence* of men upon God.

They are the following:—“In God we live, and move, and have our being.” “We are not sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God.” “I can do all things through Christ, which strengtheneth me.” “The way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” Vol. i. p. 203, 204. Vol. ii. p. 165.

These passages are advanced as ground for the inference, that God creates all the actions of men. But how does the Doctor extort from them that inference? Can

the shrewdest sophist make out that they teach any thing more than the *fact*, that men are *dependent* on God? Nothing but that fact is taught us in the first passage, obviously from the language itself, and the design of the Apostle in using it. Look at the language in connexion with which it occurs. "God that made the world, and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands, as though he needed any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things, and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being."

Now was it the Apostle's design in this language, to teach the Athenians any thing more than the fact, that God is not, according to their absurd views, dependent on men; but that men are "absolutely dependent" on Him, as their Creator, Preserver, and Governor; and that

He is a present God, not a god like those they worshiped far off? Was it his intention to instruct them at all about the *mode* of their dependence? Has he presented any thing from which it can be inferred, that the mode of their dependence is that the Doctor employs the passage to teach, any more than any other mode? If the Doctor can discern any thing of that kind, his eyes are endowed with a much keener perspicacity than ours. He must handle his metaphysical retort with magical dexterity, to transmute the declaration "in Him we live, and move, and have our being," (employed by the Apostle to show that God is not far from every one of us,) into the proposition, God *creates* all the actions of men; or to extort from it any testimony respecting the *mode* in which He brings their actions into existence.

Nothing is taught us in the second passage, taking it even in its widest application, besides the simple *fact*, that we are "absolutely dependent" on God. But the declaration was made by the Apostle merely in regard to *himself*, and the other *Ministers* of the Gospel, who were instruments of converting the Corinthians; and was merely an acknowledgment that their

success in converting the Corinthians, was owing, not to their own competency to accomplish such a work, but to the sufficiency of God. This is manifest from the connexion. In the 17th verse of the second chapter of 2d Corinthians, he asserts the sincerity and faithfulness of himself and the other Ministers of the Gospel: "We are not as many, which corrupt the word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ." He then, chapter *third*, first verse, asks, "Do we begin again to commend ourselves? or need we, as some *others*, epistles of commendation to you, or *letters* of commendation from you? Ye are our epistle written in our hearts, known and read of all men; manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us; written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshy tables of the heart." That is, you who were converted to Christ under our ministry, are proof that we are faithful and sincere ministers. He then adds—"And such trust have we through Christ to God-ward: not that we are sufficient of ourselves to think any thing as of ourselves; but our sufficiency is of God, who hath made us able minis-

ters." That is, we are thus confident that your conversion under our ministry, is a proof of our sincerity and faithfulness as ministers; not because we regard ourselves as competent to accomplish your conversion of ourselves alone, but we acknowledge that our sufficiency is of God. It is He who *made* us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter, but of the Spirit.

The import of the Apostle's declaration is, we are entirely dependent on God for the success of our ministry. The Doctor's inference from it is, God creates all the actions of men. By what route he passed to his conclusion, it is difficult to determine. We presume his position, *Men are universally and absolutely destitute of power*, was the vehicle of his conveyance. His course, then, must have been like the following:—The Apostle, and others of whom he speaks, were entirely dependent on God for their success as ministers. But since they were universally and absolutely destitute of power, they must have been equally dependent in all their other agency. All other men must, for the same reason, be dependent in the same manner. But if all men are absolutely destitute of power, they cannot act



of themselves. God, therefore, must create all their actions. Wherefore God creates all the actions of men.

What is affirmed in the third passage, beyond the mere *fact* that Christ strengthened the Apostle? Is any thing said of the *mode*? And what more is taught us in the last, than that man is dependent on God for the *mode* in which he acts?

These passages stand in precisely the same predicament, in respect to the proposition they are presented to prove, as did those of the former argument. They prove a truth, and an important one—but one which has no connexion with the proposition, more than any other truth in the universe. To make them bear at all on the proposition, it must be proved from other sources, that the *mode* in which men are dependent on God, is *that* which the Doctor's theory teaches. But he neither has, nor can, as before shown, prove that men are dependent in that mode. These passages simply teach the *fact*, that men are *dependent*; they convey us no information respecting the *mode* of their dependence. In alleging them, therefore, as a proof that God creates all the actions of men, he begs the thing to be proved, as in the preceding cases. It no more

follows from the fact, that men are dependent on God—that He creates all their actions,—than it follows, that He does not create all their actions.

It has been shown in the argument on that subject, that man may be “absolutely dependent” on God, without being absolutely destitute of power, and therefore, without having his actions created.

The Doctor’s third argument then being a mere assumption, is, like the first and second,

Vox, et preterea nihil.

We pass, therefore, to the consideration of the next

His *fourth argument* is founded on passages teaching that men are *renewed* and *sanctified* by the Holy Spirit.

We will present the reader with his most important quotations:—“A new heart will I also give you, and a new spirit will I put within you: and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you an heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and *cause* you to walk in my statutes.”—“You hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.”—“We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good

works.”—“The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us.”—“Him hath God exalted to give repentance.”—“By grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.”—“The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance.”—“It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.” Vol. i. pp. 204, 205, 206, 207, 208, 209.

“Now he that wrought us for the self same thing, is God.”—“Now the God of peace make you perfect to do his will; working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight.” pp. 359, 360.

These passages, and some others of similar import, teaching us that God renews and sanctifies the hearts of men, the Doctor presents as a ground for the inference, that He creates all the actions of men. But they teach us nothing besides the bare fact, that God renews and sanctifies men. They impart no knowledge of the *mode* of His agency in accomplishing that work. Let the reader review them, and detect, if possible, the slightest allusion to the *mode* of God’s agency. What do they assert, except that God gives a new

heart, and causes men to yield obedience to His statutes—quickens them—creates them in Christ Jesus—gives repentance, faith, love; and works in them to will and to do of his good pleasure? That is, renews and sanctifies them. The passages are employed wholly about the *effects* produced by God's agency: they have no concern whatever with the *mode* in which He produces those effects.

In regard to these, therefore, as to the preceding passages, the Doctor proves one thing and infers another. The thing to be proved is, that God creates all the actions of men. But the Doctor only proves, that He renews and sanctifies men; and infers from that, that He creates all the actions of men. His inference is no more involved in his proof, than any other inference which he could have chosen to append to it. It is, like the others, a mere assumption.

The exhibition of this fallacy shows the Doctor's argument to be wholly inconclusive, and might excuse us from any further refutation of it; but as he obviously relies on it, as a main pillar of his theory, we deem it appropriate to present the reader with a fuller demonstration of its incorrectness.

The ground of the Doctor's argument is, the *fact* taught in those passages, that God *renews and sanctifies* men. He brings that fact in support of his proposition, that God *creates all* the actions of men, by gratuitously assuming, that the *mode*, in which He renews and sanctifies, is that of *creating* their holy exercises. To the refutation of his argument then, it is only necessary that it be demonstrated, that the position he assumes is entirely gratuitous, and incapable of being proved to be true. This we will endeavour to do.

We assume the position then—

*That we know nothing of the mode of the Spirit's agency, in regenerating and sanctifying the mind.*

By this we mean, that we know nothing *how* the Holy Spirit acts on the mind to turn it from sin to holiness. Our knowledge respecting His agency is confined to the mere *fact*, that he renews and sanctifies it. Of the mode in which He acts to produce these effects we are totally ignorant.

In support of this position, we allege, in the first place, the fact, that we do not possess any knowledge of the *nature* of *spirits*, by which we can determine what the *mode* of the Holy Spirit's agency must

be in regenerating and sanctifying the mind.

The mind is a spirit. "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit." Now we have no such knowledge of the nature of spirits, that we can decide how one spirit must act on another, in order to produce effects on it. Much more emphatically true is it, that we have no such knowledge of the infinite Spirit, that we can determine how He must act on the human mind, in order to turn it from sin to holiness. But we must know the nature both of the Holy Spirit and of the human mind, and all the possible *modes* in which He can act on the human mind, and all the *effects* which would be produced by those modes of action, before we can determine, from the *nature* of spirits, what the *mode* of the Holy Spirit's agency must be, in regenerating and sanctifying the mind. That is, we must by searching find out God: we must find out the Almighty unto perfection. The Doctor, in assuming in his *first* and subsequent arguments, that the nature of the mind, as a dependent existence, is such, that even Omnipotence is not able to make it an agent, except by creating all its motions, exercises, or actions—has virtually assumed, that he has attained to that knowledge.

Again—we know not *what it is peculiar* pertaining to the unregenerate mind, that is the *cause* of its sinning uniformly; nor *what it is peculiar* pertaining to the regenerate mind, that is the *cause* of its acting in a holy manner; and therefore cannot infer, from any thing we know of the nature of the unregenerate, and the regenerate mind, the mode in which the Holy Spirit renews the one and sanctifies the other.

There must be something peculiar pertaining to the unregenerate mind, that is the cause of its sinning uniformly; and something peculiar pertaining to the regenerate mind, that is the cause of its acting in a holy manner; but of what those causes are we are universally and absolutely ignorant.

We know nothing of the unregenerate mind, distinguishing it from the regenerate, except that in all its moral agency it sins. What the peculiar thing is pertaining to it, which is the cause of its sinning uniformly, and which is a ground of certainty, that until the Spirit interposes to renew it, it will continue to sin uniformly, we know not; nor do we know what it is peculiar pertaining to the regenerate mind, that is the cause that it acts in a holy manner.

Their faculties as moral agents are, as far as we can discern, precisely the same. Those faculties, therefore, will account only for their *acting*, and not for their acting in those *different modes*.

We may *suppose*, and it will be a mere supposition, for it is incapable of being proved to be a fact, that that which is peculiar to them, and the cause of their acting in those peculiar modes is a moral taste, the train of motives under whose influence they act, or the agency of God, or a part or all of them united. But still, were our supposition even admitted to be correct, we should not possess any knowledge by which we could decide what must be the mode of the Spirit's agency in the work of renovation and sanctification.

Were we to assume, with some, that that which is peculiar to the unregenerate mind, and the cause of its sinning uniformly is a *depraved taste*; and that that, which is peculiar to the regenerate mind, and the cause of its acting in a holy manner, is a *holy taste*; we could not thence determine what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be, in removing that depraved taste, and implanting the holy one; for we are utterly ignorant of the meta-



physical nature of those tastes. Those terms do not present any description of the *nature* of the things they represent. They denote nothing more than *a state of the mind*; in the one case such, that it uniformly sins, in the other such, that it sometimes acts in a holy manner. They do not convey any description, nor any approximation to a description, of *what it is* which *constitutes* those states of mind.

The terms disposition, bias, propensity, relish, if used in any definable signification, mean nothing more. To say, that the unregenerate mind has a depraved taste, bias, relish, propensity, or disposition, which is the cause of its sinning uniformly, is only to say, it is in such a *state*, that it sins uniformly. To say, that the regenerate mind has a holy taste, bias, relish, propensity, or disposition, which is the cause of its acting in a holy manner, is only to say, it is in such a *state* that it acts in a holy manner. That language conveys no intelligence whatever of *what it is* that *constitutes* those states, or of the metaphysical nature of that which distinguishes the unregenerate and regenerate mind, and is the cause, that the one acts in the one mode, and the other in the other; and therefore does not enable us,

in the least, to determine, if the supposition of their existence is correct, what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be, in removing the depraved, and implanting the holy, taste.

Were we, with those who use this language, to say, The Spirit, in regenerating the mind, removes the depraved taste and implants a holy one—we should say nothing more than that He causes the *state* of the mind to be *such*, that it acts in a holy manner, instead of being, as before, *such*, that it acts uniformly in a sinful manner, without exhibiting any description of the *metaphysical nature* of the *effect* produced by His agency; and therefore, without presenting any ground, from which we could infer the *mode* of His agency, in producing that effect.

Were we to assume, with others, that the *train of motives* presented to the unregenerate mind, is all that is peculiar to it, and the sole cause of its acting uniformly in a sinful manner; and that the train of motives presented to the regenerate mind, is all that is peculiar to it, and the sole cause that it acts in a holy manner; still we should not be enabled by that assumption, admitting it to be correct, to decide what the mode of the Spirit's agency

must be, in the work of renovation and sanctification. For in order to determine that, we must possess a knowledge of all the possible modes in which the Holy Spirit can present motives to the mind.—And that knowledge would involve a perfect knowledge of the nature both of the Holy Spirit and of the human mind, and that would involve omniscience.

We not only do not know *all* the modes in which the Holy Spirit can present motives to the mind, but we do not know *any* of them; and therefore cannot infer from the assumption, that the train of motives presented to it is the cause of its acting as it does, what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be, in presenting such a train of motives as shall turn it from sin to holiness.

Were we to assume, with others, that the *absence* of the *agency* of the Holy Spirit is all that is peculiar to the unregenerate mind, and the sole cause of its sinning uniformly; and that the *agency* of the Spirit is all that is peculiar to the regenerate mind, and the sole cause of its acting in a holy manner—we should be equally incapable of deciding, from that assumption, what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be in the work of renovating

and sanctifying the mind : since, in order to determine that, it would, as in the former case, be necessary to know all the possible modes in which the Holy Spirit can exert a direct agency on the mind.

Were we, with others, to assume, that men *always* act under the *direct agency* of God ; and that a *peculiarity* in the mode of God's agency on it, is all that is peculiar to the unregenerate mind, and the sole cause of its acting uniformly in a sinful manner ; and that all that is peculiar to the regenerate mind, and the sole cause of its acting in a holy manner, is a *peculiarity* in the mode of God's agency on it ; we should still be equally incompetent to pronounce what the mode of His agency must be, in renewing and sanctifying the mind ; since, as before, without omniscience, we are incompetent to pronounce what the mode of His agency must be, in producing any effect.

Or were we to assume, that *part*, or *all* of these things, of the *one class*, which can be *united*, were that which is peculiar to the unregenerate mind ; and *part* or *all* of these things, of the *other class*, which can be *united*, were that which is peculiar to the regenerate mind, and respectively the causes of their acting in their respec-

tive modes; we should still be equally unable to decide what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be in the work of renovation and sanctification; since a knowledge of what must be the mode of his agency, in *all* the preceding cases, would be necessary in order to determine what it must be in *this*, in which part or all of those would be united.

Since then, if we *assume*, that either of the supposed causes we have enumerated is the *real* cause that the unregenerate and regenerate mind act in their respective modes, we are still incompetent to determine what the mode of the Spirit's agency must be, in renewing and sanctifying the mind: and since we do not *know* either what it is, peculiar to the unregenerate mind, that is the cause of its uniformly sinning; nor what it is, peculiar to the regenerate mind, that is the cause of its acting in a holy manner; therefore, we cannot infer, from any thing we know respecting the nature of the unregenerate and regenerate mind, what the mode of the Spirit's agency is, in renewing the one, and sanctifying the other. For in order to determine *how* the Spirit acts on the mind to regenerate and sanctify it, we must know what He does to regenerate

and sanctify it. We cannot determine the *mode* of His agency till we learn the exact nature of the *effect*. But the effect of His agency is the removal of the cause of the mind's acting in a sinful manner, and producing the cause of its acting in a holy manner. Being then universally and absolutely ignorant of the nature of those causes, we are incompetent to decide on the mode in which the one is removed and the other produced.

In proof of our position we allege, secondly. That nothing is known of the mode of the Spirit's agency from *feeling* or *observation*. Those, who are regenerated and sanctified, have no knowledge from *consciousness* of the mode in which the Spirit acts on them, in producing those effects. They are not *conscious* of His *agency* at all, and therefore not conscious of the *mode* of His agency. They are only conscious of their holy exercises, the consequences of His agency. They do not learn the fact, that *He* regenerates and sanctifies them from *consciousness*, but from revelation; and were not the doctrine taught in the Scriptures, would have no evidence, nor ground to conjecture, that it is the Holy Spirit, that renews and sanctifies them. They would sup-

pose they renewed and sanctified themselves. This the Doctor admits. "It is as impossible that we should *feel* the operation of God upon our hearts, while he works in us both to will and to do, as it was, that Adam should have *felt* the forming hand of God in his creation." Vol. i. p. 215.

As then they do not learn the *fact*, that the *Spirit* renews and sanctifies, from feeling, they of course do not learn the *mode* of His agency, in renewing and sanctifying, from that source. Nor is any thing learnt on the subject from observation.—The eye is unable to discern either the human mind, or the divine Spirit, and therefore cannot observe any thing of the mode in which the Holy Spirit acts on the mind, in the work of renovation and sanctification.

To sustain our position we allege, thirdly, That *Revelation* does not present us with any knowledge respecting the mode in which the Spirit renews and sanctifies the mind.

The Scriptures merely reveal the *fact*, that the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies the mind. They convey to us no knowledge whatever of the *mode* of His agency, in producing those effects.

Thus, none of the passages ascribing regeneration and sanctification to His agency, teach any thing more than the *fact*, that He regenerates and sanctifies. Examine the following: "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." "He saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost." "Ye are washed, ye are sanctified,—by the Spirit of our God." "The love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost." Do these passages inform us of any thing respecting the Spirit's agency, except the simple *fact*, that He renews and sanctifies? Can you, by any process whatever, obtain from them any testimony respecting the *mode* of His agency? Look over all the other passages in the Sacred Volume, and you will find, that none of them convey us any more intelligence than these.

No inference whatever can be drawn from the language employed to designate regeneration and sanctification, in regard to the mode of the Spirit's agency in producing those effects. The language is *figurative*, and very dissimilar. The most common forms of expression employed to denote them, are, to be born again; to



be renewed in the spirit of the mind; to be transformed by the renewing of the mind; to be quickened; to be created anew in righteousness and holiness; to put off the old and put on the new man; to give a new heart and new spirit; to shed abroad love in the heart, and to work in us to will and to do. These forms of expression are derived from the modes in which effects are produced in the material world; and designate modes of operation universally and absolutely different from each other. To be born is a totally different operation from that of being renewed; and to be renewed is a totally different operation from that of being transformed; and to be transformed is an operation totally different from that of being quickened; to be quickened is totally different from being created; to be created is totally different from putting off and putting on; to put off and put on are totally different from giving; to give is totally different from shedding abroad; and shedding abroad is totally different from working in.—These forms of expression designate modes of producing effects utterly unlike each other; and therefore no conclusion can be drawn from any one or all of them, respecting the *mode* of the Spirit's agency

in accomplishing the renovation and sanctification of the mind. For no reason can be assigned for regarding one as exhibiting a literal description of the mode of the Spirit's agency, which will not apply with equal force to prove, that any other presents a literal description of the mode. There is as much evidence that the word "born" is used literally, as there is that the word "renewed" is so used; and as much, that the word "renewed" is employed literally, as there is that the word "transformed," "quicken- ed," "created," or any other is. That is, there is no evidence at all that either is used literally; but evidence from this variety and dissimilarity of the language, which must satisfy every one in the least acquainted with the laws of interpreta- tion, that none of it is employed literally to denote the mode of the Spirit's agen- cy. The language is figurative, and em- ployed to convey to us nothing beyond the *fact*, that the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies the mind.

But our Lord has entirely debarred the hope of learning any thing on this subject from Revelation, and rebuked the pre- sumption, which attempts to explore it, by expressly declaring, in reply to the

inquiry of Nicodemus respecting the mode of regeneration, that it is entirely unknown to those who experience it. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth."

This declaration was addressed to Nicodemus, in reply to his inquiry respecting the mode in which regeneration is effected. Our Lord had remarked to him, "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus inferred from the language, that the body was the subject of the change indicated; and asked, "How can a man be born when he is old; can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born?" Our Lord, in return, corrected in the first place his misapprehension, by declaring the Holy Spirit to be the *Author* of the change, and not the natural parent, and the soul to be the *subject* of the change, not the body. "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh;" that is, it is the body which is the subject of the natural birth; "and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit;" that is, it is

the soul, which is the subject of renovation by the Spirit.

He then replied to his inquiry respecting the *mode* in which it is effected; by declaring that the mode in which the Spirit accomplishes it, is as entirely unknown to its subjects, as the mode in which the air moves is unknown to those who feel its effects. “The wind bloweth where it listeth”—the air moves by laws adapted to its own nature—“and thou hearest the sound thereof”—and you feel its effects—“but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth”—but you are ignorant of the mode in which it moves. “So is every one that is born of the Spirit”—so the subjects of the Spirit’s influence only feel its effects; they know nothing of the mode in which He produces those effects. We have then the testimony of the Omniscient Redeemer, that we know nothing of the mode of the Spirit’s agency.

It had been happy for the cause of truth, had Doctor E. and other theologians and philosophers been satisfied with this explicit decision of the Son of God, and not, like Nicodemus, permitted a restless curiosity to ask again, “*How* can these things be?” and suffered a pre-

sumptuous fancy to fabricate and promulgate theories of the mode of the Spirit's agency, which contradict the truth and perplex the faith and peace of the Church.

These several considerations then, demonstrate the truth of our position, that we know nothing of the *mode* of the Spirit's agency in regenerating and sanctifying the mind.

The only sources from which we can possibly gain a knowledge of the mode, are those we have enumerated; that of deducing it from our knowledge of the nature of the mind and the Holy Spirit; that of learning it from feeling or observation; or that of learning it from testimony. If there is no known truth respecting the Holy Spirit and the mind, from which we can infer it, we must learn it, if at all, from some of the other sources. If we are not taught it by feeling or observation, we must resort to testimony, and to the testimony of God only; for men, unless they learn it from one of the preceding sources, are incompetent to testify respecting it. And if God gives us no knowledge on the subject, and moreover declares us utterly ignorant respecting it, then we have the most per-

fect demonstration, that we are universally and absolutely ignorant respecting it.

Even the Doctor has, it would seem, in a moment of forgetfulness, given his testimony to the truth of our position, and the declaration of the Redeemer: "Our dependence on the Deity to work in us both to will and to do, is demonstrable; but *how* God operates on our minds in our free and voluntary exercises, we are unable to comprehend." Vol i. p. 212.

What, then, becomes of the truth of his theory respecting the mode of God's agency on mankind? Whose fire lighted the torch with which he penetrated this incomprehensibility? Whose authority encouraged him to announce to the world, with so bold a voice, that "the heart may be *created* as well as the understanding, or moral exercises as well as natural faculties? that the hearts of saints *are created*; or that their free and voluntary exercises are the production of divine power?" and, "that the divine agency is as *much concerned* in the *bad* as in the *good* actions" of men, and "*in precisely the same manner*?" 'That is, that God *creates all* the actions of men?

The Doctor's common sense, it seems

from the above confession, for once, even in respect to this subject, triumphed over his love of theorizing; and we cannot but regret that it had not maintained its supremacy.

Since, then, it is demonstrated, that we know nothing of the mode in which the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies the mind, it is demonstrated, that the Doctor's assumption, from the passages teaching that the Holy Spirit renews and sanctifies men, that the *mode* in which he accomplishes that work, is that of *creating* all their holy exercises, is entirely gratuitous, and incapable of being proved to be true: and therefore his conclusion from those passages, that God creates all the actions of men, is a mere assumption, and incapable of being proved from those passages to be true.

Let us now turn our eye to his *fifth* argument, founded on the *prayers of good men*. It is contained in the following quotation:—"The prayers of all good men suppose, that they must be acted upon by a divine operation in all their virtuous exercises and actions. For when they pray for themselves, that God would give them joy, peace, love, faith, submission, or strengthen and increase these and all

Other Christian graces, their prayers presuppose the necessity of a divine operation upon their hearts, in all their gracious exercises and exertions. And when they pray for the world in general, that God would suppress vice and irreligion every where, convince and convert sinners, comfort and edify saints, and spread the Redeemer's kingdom through the earth, their prayers are founded in the belief, that God must work in men both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Vol. i. p. 209, 210.

His argument, viewed in relation to the proposition expressing his theory, is briefly this: The prayers of good men, for the influence of the Spirit on themselves and others, *presuppose a necessity* of a *divine operation* on them in all their actions; therefore God *creates* all their actions—"A short cut to infallibility."—Where is your proof that the prayers of good men, for the Spirit to influence themselves and others to holiness, presupposes the necessity of a divine operation on themselves and others in all their sinful agency? Where is your proof, granting that such a necessity exists, that the *mode* of that agency must be such as you represent it?



The fifth argument, like all its predecessors, is an unfledged *petitio principii*. It does not follow from the fact, that good men pray for the influences of the Holy Spirit to renew and sanctify themselves and others, that there is a *natural* necessity for His influence on them in all their holy exercises: it may be only a *moral* necessity. If there is a natural necessity for His influences in all their holy actions, it does not thence follow that there is a similar necessity for a divine operation upon their hearts in all their other actions: and if there be such a necessity, it does not thence follow, that the *mode* of the agency is such as the Doctor represents it. He has not presented the slightest ground for his conclusion, that God *creates* all the actions of men. There is not a step from his premise, *Good men pray*, to his conclusion, *God creates*, that is not “universal and absolute” beggary. His argument had been infinitely more correct and convincing had he reasoned thus: The prayers of good men presuppose a necessity of the influence of the Spirit in their holy actions; and therefore they do *not* presuppose a necessity of a “divine operation” in their other actions; and therefore God does *not* create all the actions of men.

The prayers of good men, in accordance with the commands of the Gospel, for the renewing and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit on themselves and others, prove the *fact* simply that they *need* those influences; they prove nothing respecting the nature of that necessity, nor of the mode of the Spirit's agency. The fact, that they need a divine influence in all their other agency, and that the mode of that agency must be such as the Doctor exhibits it, must be proved from other sources, before the conclusion can be drawn from those prayers, that God *creates all the actions* of men. But the Doctor neither has, nor can prove that. His fifth argument therefore yields no support to his theory. It "presupposes" a great dearth of materials to sustain his theory, and exemplifies the miserable shifts to which a system builder will resort to rear his edifice, and give it

"The grace and gayety of nature."

The Doctor's *sixth argument* is founded on the *possibility* of God's creating all the actions of men. It is sufficiently exhibited in the following passages selected from it. In endeavouring to prove that Adam was created upright in heart, he assumes

the position, "that it is *agreeable* to the *nature* of virtue or true holiness to be *created*." In proof of this he alleges, that "the first volition of every created agent must have a *cause altogether involuntary*; and if it proceed from an *involuntary* cause, it matters not whether that cause was within or without himself." He thence infers, "it *might have been* created, or produced by the Deity." Then, after a short argument from the dependence of Adam, (who, he asserts, "could no more produce his own volitions than his own existence,") to prove "that holiness not only *may*, but *must be created*;" he proceeds to observe, that God is able to create holiness. His proof of it is, that "He can create, or bring out of nothing into existence, whatever He pleases. As He can create a body, and create a soul, which are lower kinds of existence; so He can create virtue or true holiness, which is the highest and noblest kind of existence." Vol. i. p. 279, 280, 281. And in his third inference, vol. i. p. 228, he presents the possibility, there considered as proved, that God can produce the holy actions of men, as proof that He can produce their sinful actions also; and thence infers, that He does produce them; and alleges, to sup-

port the inference, passages of Scripture, in which God is said to have hardened the hearts of Pharaoh and the Israelites. His language is—"If saints can work out their own salvation under a positive influence of the Deity, then sinners can work out their own destruction under his positive influence. As saints can act while they are acted upon, so sinners can act while they are acted upon. Hence it is just as easy to see that sinners can work out their own destruction, as that saints can work out their own salvation, under the operation of the Deity." He then, after quoting the passages referred to, infers that they do so. "These different applications of the same text can be reconciled only on the supposition, that the Prophet, that Christ, and the Apostles," who used it, "meant to convey the idea, that sinners work out their own destruction, under the positive influence of the Deity."

This argument, then, is briefly this: God *can* create all the actions of men; therefore God *does* create all the actions of men. This is an expeditious method of proving propositions. A proposition *may* be true, therefore it *is* true. We have often heard that whatever is, is; but never

before, that whatever *may* be, is. Let us apply this convenient method of demonstration to our author himself. The Doctor *may* have reasoned falsely; therefore he *has* reasoned falsely. His whole theory *may* be a figment of "science falsely so called;" therefore such a figment it *is*. He may have his choice, whether to give up the argument by abandoning the principle on which it depends; or to retain the argument, and permit its principle to subvert his theory.

His theory is thus, if we mistake not, left standing on one pillar only. Let us explore the foundation on which that rests.

His *seventh* argument is founded on the *adaptation* of his theory to account for the fall of Adam. "Since God can work in men both to will and to do of his good pleasure, it is as easy to account for the first offence of Adam as for any other sin." "As these and all other methods to account for the fall of Adam, *by the instrumentality of second causes*, are insufficient to remove the difficulty, it seems necessary to have recourse to the divine agency, and to suppose that God wrought in Adam both to will and to do in his first transgression." That is, we must believe that

God created his transgression, because we cannot satisfactorily account for its existence in any other way. 'The Doctor adds, as though his theory were irrefragably proved to be true, by its adaptation to account for that transgression—"His first sin *was* a free, voluntary exercise, *produced* by a *divine operation*." Vol. i. p. 232. 234.

If this reasoning is good, the Doctor deserves the humble and hearty thanks of all infidels and theorizing philosophers for its discovery. It will make the foolishness of men wiser than God, and the weakness of men stronger than God. Let us apply the principle on which it depends, viz. that a theory which will account for a fact. is correct because it will account for that fact.

Spinoza's Theory of the World will account for its existence; therefore his theory is true. Hume's Theory of Impressions and Ideas will account for impressions and ideas; therefore it is true. Des Carte's Theory of Vortices will account for the revolutions of the planets; therefore it is true. The theories of infidels respecting the forgery of the Scriptures, will account for their existence; therefore those theories are true.

This principle will "prove all things," but not "hold fast that which is good," with any firmer grasp than its opposite. It is a fit instrument to give authority to "old wives' fables," "endless genealogies," and the "doctrines of devils."

The Doctor must first prove that his theory will account for the fall of Adam, consistently with his moral agency, before he can employ its adaptation to account for that fall to prove his theory; and must also prove the principle of his argument to be correct, before he can employ it to prove, from that adaptation of his theory, that his theory is true.

If we are not deceived, the Doctor's seven arguments are shown to be universally and absolutely erroneous, and his lofty edifice reared on them subverted.

The reader may well be astonished that this theory, so novel, so contradictory to the common views of mankind, is published with such dauntless dogmatism; and that having enjoyed so wide a currency, and gained so many advocates, it should be found to rest on no other foundation than the Doctor's *ipse dixit*.

He valiantly begs the whole theory from the beginning to the end. He com-

mences the goodly work, by assuming in his first argument, without offering a particle of proof but his own authority, that God cannot communicate power to a being without communicating omnipotence. Man, therefore, not being omnipotent, he concludes is universally and absolutely destitute of power. But, his next step is, if thus destitute of power, man "can no more act than he can exist without a divine efficiency." Therefore, the mighty conclusion is, God creates all his actions. This position, that the dependence of men is such, that God *must create* all their actions, he employs to bring all his subsequent arguments to bear upon his theory. None of them have a shadow of conclusiveness, unless the truth of that position is granted.

It does not follow from the fact, that God *governs* all the actions of men, that He *creates* all their actions; unless it is true that He *must create* them all in order to govern them. He begs that position therefore in his second argument.

It does not follow from the fact, that men are "*absolutely dependent*" on God, that he creates all their actions, unless it is true that there *cannot be* an "universal and absolute dependence," without an



absolute destitution of power to act. He therefore begs that position in his third argument.

It does not follow from the fact, that the Holy Spirit *renews and sanctifies* men, that God creates all their holy actions, unless it is true, that He cannot bring their holy actions into existence, by any other *kind of agency* than that which creates.

Nor does it follow from the fact, granting it to be one, that God creates the *holy* actions of men, that He also creates all their actions; unless it is true, that He cannot bring their other actions into existence by any other kind of agency, than that which creates. He begs that position therefore in his fourth argument.

It does not follow from their *need, pre-supposed in the prayers of good men*, for themselves and others, of the influences of the Spirit, that God creates all their actions; unless it is true, that He cannot bring any of their actions into existence, except by creating them. He begs that position, therefore, in his fifth argument.

It does not follow from the *possibility* of God's creating all the actions of men, that He *does create* them: unless it is true, that He cannot bring them into existence in

any other way than that of creating them. He therefore begs that position in his sixth argument.

It does not follow from the fact, granting it to be a fact, that the Doctor's theory is *adapted to account for the fall of Adam*; that God creates all the actions of men; unless it is true, that He cannot bring their actions into existence in any other way. He begs that position in his seventh argument therefore.

His six last arguments, like a hexagonal tub-pulpit on its pillar, rest entirely on the first. If that is erroneous they are without force; and if that holds, they are utterly useless. For as they possess no force, but what they borrow from the first argument, they can yield no support to the theory, which that argument does not afford.

His first argument rests entirely on the broad circumference of his own dogmatical declaration. Those, if there be such, who regard the Doctor as gifted with omniscience and infallibility, will believe his theory; and none others:

—————Credat Judæus Appella;  
Non ego—

To this refutation of the Doctor's ar-

guments, we subjoin several other considerations, evincing his theory to be erroneous.

In the first place we allege, as a ground of *probability* that his theory is entirely erroneous, the consideration, that the Doctor is unable to discover any *proof* of its *truth*. None of the arguments advanced by him to support it, are valid. He has searched the Scriptures; he has resorted to the dictates of reason and common sense; he has laid heaven, earth, and "the dark world beneath," under contribution, for testimony, without success. His theory, after all, is left to rest solely on his own authority.

Now it is in our apprehension an ominous circumstance, that nothing better than gratuitous assumptions contradicting the universal judgment of mankind, bold assertions, and the illusions of sophistry, can be obtained after so much labour, to yield their support to his theory. Did the Scriptures furnish any proof of its truth, the eager eye of the Doctor would surely have detected it. Were it demonstrable from the dictates of reason and common sense, we have too high an opinion of his sagacity to believe it could have escaped him. Had any evidence

of its truth existed, he or his disciples would have discovered it, and given it to the world. This "universal and absolute" dearth of evidence, that his theory is true, presents a sturdy probability, that it is entirely erroneous. It makes shipwreck of our faith in it. We cannot credit such a theory without evidence.

*Secondly.* We present in proof, that the Doctor's theory is groundless, the consideration, that it contradicts the decisions of common sense. We have before dwelt on this topic, but hope the repetition will not be thought wholly superfluous.

It is the natural and universal conviction of mankind, that the power by which their actions are exerted, is their own; and belongs to their constitution, as much as do their understanding, affections, and existence itself. This conviction, as was remarked in the answer to the Doctor's first argument, to which the reader is requested to refer, is as natural and invincible, as is their conviction from the fact that they act, that they exist; or from the fact that they perceive external objects, that those objects exist; and no one can divest himself of it any more than he can persuade himself that neither he nor external objects exist. This conviction dis-

plays itself in all their conduct, and extends over them as wide and important an influence as any conviction whatever; it is a first principle. They exhibit it in all their exertions to produce effects in themselves, and other objects; in their purposes respecting futurity; in their reliance on the purposes of one another; in their views of obligation; and in their language.

Now this decision of common sense, we must admit to be according to truth; or plunge ourselves into the abyss of universal skepticism. For this conviction is a necessary effect of our constitution; and if we cannot trust the testimony of our constitution in one case, we cannot trust it in another. No reason can be given, that we should trust the testimony of our constitution, that external objects exist, which will not oblige us to trust its testimony in this case. None can be given, that we should confide in its testimony to our existence, which will not force us to credit its testimony to this fact. Our existence is no more a subject of consciousness, than power is; nor is the existence of external objects. Whatever our constitution obliges us to believe, we must believe to be *true*. If

then we would not doubt of our own existence, the existence of external objects, or any other truths, whose evidence is furnished by common sense, we must regard her testimony as indubitably true, that the power by which we act is our own, in distinction from God's power, as our existence is our own, in distinction from His.

Besides, if we admit that our constitution deceives us in this case, since God made our constitution, we must regard Him as deceiving us. But if He has deceived us on a subject of such pre-eminent importance, by our constitution, we cannot prove, nor present any probable reason, that He has not deceived us on every other subject. We must therefore abandon all our confidence in Him.

But God is true. He has not deceived us. Our constitution gives a testimony in accordance with fact. The power by which we act is our own, and not God's, in the same manner that our existence is our own, and not His. God then does not create all our actions. The Doctor's theory therefore is untrue.

*Thirdly.* The Doctor's theory is contradictory to the representation of the Scriptures, that the Spirit of God influen-

ces men only in the work of conviction, regeneration, and sanctification; or that the influence of the Spirit on men is a peculiarity of the work of redemption; and is therefore untrue.

Every reader of the Scriptures gains from them the impression, that mankind are subjects of the influences of the Holy Spirit in conviction, regeneration, and sanctification only; and in all their other agency act without His influence. This impression is produced by the influence of the Holy Spirit being promised as an extraordinary and peculiar influence.— Thus it was promised to the ancient church, “I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes. In the last days, saith God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh.” And Christ promised the disciples, “If I depart, I will send him,” the Comforter, “unto you; and when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment.” Now these promises, if they possess any significance, imply, that the influence promised, was extraordinary; that mankind do not all enjoy it; nor do its subjects at all times. If they were always equally the subjects of the Spirit’s influence, these promises would have no

more significance, than would a promise of future activity, or sensibility, or any thing else, which is involved in existence.

This impression is produced by the prayers of prophets and apostles for the influences of the Spirit. The prayer of the Psalmist is—"Take not thy Holy Spirit from me; uphold me with thy free Spirit." In like manner, the Apostle prays that the Corinthian Church may enjoy "the communion of the Holy Ghost;" and that God may make the Hebrews "perfect in every good work, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight." And with these accord all the prayers contained in the sacred volume, for a divine influence.—They all proceed on the ground, that such an influence is not enjoyed by all, nor by any at all times.

This impression is produced by the representation, that the children of God alone enjoy the sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" "If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The saints, individually, are represented as temples, and the Church, collectively, as an habitation, in which the Spirit of God dwells.



The reason and propriety of this representation cannot be seen, if the Spirit influences others as much as the children of God, and dwells in them equally.

This impression is produced by the ascription of all the holiness of men to the influence of the Holy Spirit; and all the wickedness of men to themselves and the agency of the devil. They "are washed and sanctified by the Spirit." Their various holy affections are the "fruits" of His influences. But the wicked "walk after the flesh, and mind the things of the flesh." "They walk according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit, that now worketh in the children of disobedience."

This language is utterly inexplicable, unless the influence of the Spirit on men is extraordinary and peculiar, and confined to the work of convicting, renewing, and sanctifying them.

Thus all the language of the Scriptures, on this subject, conveys the impression, that the influence of the Holy Spirit on men is extraordinary, and employed entirely in the great work of convicting them of sin, and turning them from it to holiness. Strike out the passages relating

to this influence from the Scriptures, and no one would obtain the impression, that men were subject to "a divine influence," essentially like that exerted by the Holy Spirit.

Now the Doctor's theory is entirely contradictory to this representation of the Scriptures, so palpable to the eye of every reader. According to his representation, men need precisely the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil, as in doing good; and the agency of God is concerned in precisely the same manner in their wrong, as in their right actions. Vol. ii. p. 40. Now both of these representations cannot be correct. If God promises His Spirit, as a peculiar gift, to some, and not to others; if He gives Him to some, and not to others; if His Spirit influences men to holiness only, and not to sin; if all who are not Christ's, have not the Holy Spirit; then men do not need the same kind and degree of divine agency in doing evil as in doing good; and the agency of God is not concerned in precisely the same manner in their wrong as in their right actions.

The Doctor may perhaps attempt to escape from this argument against his theory, by the pretence, that his repre-

sentation of *God*, without a *personal designation*, as creating all the *sinful* actions of men, is consistent with the doctrine of the Scriptures, and his admission of it, for he admits it, that the agency of the Holy Spirit on mankind is a peculiarity of the work of redemption. But by resorting to that pretence, he will only embarrass his theory by another equal inconsistency with the sacred volume.

For in the first place, it is a mere assumption, and equally contradictory to the doctrine in question, that *God* ever exerts such an agency on man, as the Doctor designates by the terms "divine," "direct," "positive influence," except it be by the Holy Spirit in convicting, renewing, and sanctifying them. We challenge the Doctor to produce a passage from the sacred volume in which it is asserted, or necessarily implied, that God exerts on men such an influence in their wicked actions. He will undoubtedly turn his eye to those passages in which God is said to have *hardened the hearts* of Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Israelites. God is indeed said to have hardened their hearts; but He is not said to have done it by a "divine," "direct," or "positive influence;" that is, an influence

essentially like that exerted by the Holy Spirit.

The *mode* in which he accomplishes it is not declared.

It is not necessary, in order to account for their being hardened, to suppose He exerted such an influence. It was not necessary, (and the Doctor, in deciding this question, cannot assume it as necessary, unless he chooses to be as faulty as he has been in begging the thing to be proved in all his other arguments,) that God should have exerted a “divine influence” on them, in order that they should *act*; for we have shown, that men are possessed of power to act, and are, as agents, dependent on God only for the *mode* in which they act. Nor can it be proved, nor is it needful to suppose, that it was necessary that He should have exerted on them a “divine influence,” to have produced *that effect* in their hearts, which is denoted when they are said to have been *hardened*. What is a *hard heart*? Is it any thing more than a heart, that resists strong motives presented to induce it to obey the divine will? A perverse, rebellious, incorrigible heart?—Conceive of the hearts of Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Israelites, when har-

dened, and will you conceive of any thing more than this? What then is it *to harden* a heart? Is it any thing more than to bring it into a *state*, in which it shall resist strong motives to obedience; be perverse, incorrigible, and rebellious? What then is *necessary* to harden a heart? Is it any thing more than to bring it into *circumstances*, in which the motives to *sin* presented to it are *stronger* than those to *holiness*; that is, in which of the objects constituting the two classes of motives presented to the mind, *those*, which are motives to *sin*, are such as are regarded by the mind as having a *greater capacity* to afford *pleasure*, than *those* which are motives to *holiness*? Nothing more than this is necessary, if, as has been shown, man has power to act, and the *mode* in which he acts may be determined by the *motives* presented to his mind. Invest Pharaoh with power to act, and present such a train of considerations to his mind, as should lead him to feel that it would contribute more to his good, to detain the Israelites than to let them go, and you harden his heart as much as God did. Is it asked, Could such a series of considerations be presented to his mind? We answer, yes; for there was. He actually

viewed the disadvantages of letting the Israelites go, as greater than the disadvantages of retaining them; and therefore *would not* let Israel go. His pride, his absolute authority, the considerations arising from the long slavery of Israel, and the advantages accruing from it to the Egyptians; the provocations arising from the injuries he had suffered in consequence of his former refusal to let them go; the influence of priests, anxious lest the triumph of Moses should destroy their reputation: these and other circumstances of his condition furnished abundant materials for motives to secure his choice to detain the Israelites.

But can a heart be brought into circumstances, in which the motives to sin are stronger than to holiness; or can such a series of motives be presented to the mind, without a "divine influence" is exerted on it? We answer—it is impossible to prove, or render it probable, that it cannot. And if a heart can ever, without a "divine operation," be brought into circumstances, in which the motives to sin presented to it are stronger than those to holiness, no reason can be given why it might not in the case in question. And to assume that it could not in that case,

is to assume, that it cannot in any; and is therefore to assume the thing in question, and to be proved.

Did not the daughters of Moab, by bringing the Israelites into circumstances, in which the motives to sin were stronger than those to holiness, in the same manner harden the hearts of the Israelites? In the same manner did not the Presidents and Princes harden the heart of Darius, to cast Daniel into the den of lions? And did not the rewards offered to the Prophet by Naaman, harden the heart of Gehazi to ask of the Assyrian two talents of silver, and two changes of garments?

It is not therefore necessary, nor at all proper, to suppose, that God exerted on Pharaoh, the Egyptians, and the Israelites, a "direct," "divine," or "positive influence," in order to harden their hearts; for the supposition must be made without any reason to support it. We can as easily conceive of His hardening their hearts without, as with, such an agency.

Since, then, there is neither proof nor probability that God ever exerts a "divine influence" on men, except by the Holy Spirit, in the work of redemption, the Doctor, were he to teach that God.

without any personal designation, creates all their sinful actions, would contradict the doctrine of the Scriptures, as universally as though he had represented the Holy Spirit as the agent who creates all their sinful actions. The doctrine of the Scriptures is, that God never exerts a "divine influence" on mankind, *except by the Holy Spirit.*

The representation of the Doctor, if he assumes the ground we have supposed him to assume, is, that He does exert on them a divine influence in all their agency, besides that in which they are influenced by the Spirit. The doctrine of the Scriptures is, that God exerts on them no "divine influence," except that by which they are convicted, renewed, and sanctified. The Doctor, by making that assumption, would represent His agency to be as much concerned in their bad as in their good actions, and in precisely the same manner.

In the second place, the Doctor, in assuming that ground, will greatly endanger his own craft. He represents men as needing the same *kind* and *degree* of divine agency in doing evil as in doing good: and thence infers, that the agency of God is concerned *in precisely the same manner* in



their wrong as in their right actions. But if the Spirit is the sole agent in creating their holy actions, and is not the agent, or not the sole agent, in creating their sinful actions, then the agency of God is not concerned in precisely the same manner in their wrong as in their right actions, and therefore they do not need the same kind of agency in doing evil as in doing good.

Again: the Doctor, in his fourth and fifth arguments, from the fact that the *Holy Spirit* exerts a "divine influence" on men in the work of *conviction and sanctification*, infers, that *God* exerts a "divine influence" on men in all their *sinful actions*. But if he admits that the influence of the Holy Spirit is a peculiarity of the work of redemption, and owes its existence entirely to that, he cannot infer from that peculiarity, that God exerts an influence, the same in kind and degree, on all mankind in all their *sinful* conduct. No inference whatever can be, with any propriety, drawn from what is *peculiar* to one part of His administration, in respect to another part of it. The impropriety of that mode of inference will be seen by an exemplification. It is a peculiarity of the work of redemption, that the *Word* was

made flesh and dwelt among us; therefore, in all His other administration, *God* is made flesh, and dwells among us. It is a peculiarity of the work of redemption, that *Jesus Christ* is Mediator between God and man; therefore *God*, in all His other administration, is Mediator between God and man. Is it any better reasoning to say, it is a peculiarity of the work of redemption, that the *Holy Spirit* exerts a "divine influence" on mankind in *convicting* and *sanctifying* them; therefore *God* exerts a "divine influence" on them in all their *sinful* agency? If the Doctor, then, avails himself of the pretence we have supposed him to make, he must abandon his fourth and fifth arguments, as far as he employs them to prove that God creates the sinful actions of men.

In the third place, if God exerts a "divine influence" on men in all their sinful agency, precisely the same in kind and degree as the Holy Spirit exerts on men in their holy agency, why are we not taught it in the Scriptures as explicitly? Why are we not told, that God works in the wicked both to will and to do, in all their sinful agency, by a "divine influence," as we are, that He works in the saints "both to will and to do of his good pleasure?"

Why are we not told, that the wicked are His workmanship, created not after Christ Jesus by a “divine influence;” that He creates them not after God in unrighteousness and true sinfulness by the same influence? Why are we not told, that they are unwashed and unsanctified, and condemned by the “direct influence” of God? And that hatred, sorrow, enmity, impatience, severity, malevolence, unbelief, pride, and intemperance, are fruits of that influence, as we are that the opposite virtues are the fruits of the Spirit? Why do we not hear the Psalmist deprecating—Create not in me a polluted heart, and renew not in me a wrong spirit: do not stain me thoroughly with iniquity, and pollute me not with sin, by a “direct influence?” This language would be perfectly natural, were the Doctor’s representation correct. We should as much expect the doctrine of *God’s* “divine influence” to be explicitly taught, as the doctrine of the Spirit’s influence. It is as important a doctrine. The Doctor holds it to be of the first consequence that it be known.—“He is really concerned in all their actions; and it is as important that his agency should be brought into view, as that theirs should. For his character

can no more be known without ascribing his agency to himself, than their characters can be known without ascribing their agency to themselves." Vol. ii. p. 35.

If it is thus necessary that His agency should be known, in order that His character may be known, it obviously is equally necessary that the exact *nature* of His agency should be known, in order that His real character may be seen. If God exerts any agency on men, it must be "true and righteous altogether," and adapted, if known, to promote His glory. Why, then, is not this doctrine, if true, revealed to us? why, at least, are there not some hints of it? Were prophets and apostles ignorant of it? Was it left "hid from the foundation of the world" till this late age, for our author to discover?

But how unlike the Doctor's representation, are the views of the divine agency exhibited in the sacred volume! How entirely would the aspect of the divine government and character be changed, were that doctrine inserted in its holy pages? What could the hand of infidelity inscribe there, which should more "absolutely" "change the truth of God into a lie," and "the glory of the incorruptible God into an image, made like to corruptible man?"

The Doctor, then, if he avails himself of the pretence to which we have supposed him to resort, to reconcile his theory with the doctrine that the agency of the Holy Spirit is extraordinary and peculiar, must encounter difficulties as great as though he left the contradiction without attempting to obviate it.

Since, therefore, his theory is thus entirely contradictory to the representation of the Scriptures respecting the agency of the Spirit, his theory is untrue.

*Fourthly.* The Doctor's theory is contradictory to the doctrine of the Scriptures, that the devil exerts an agency on mankind.

The Scriptures represent the devil as an invisible and powerful agent, employed continually in influencing men to sin. The Apostle declares, "Your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour." He is exhibited as blinding the minds of men; working in the children of disobedience, and taking men captive at his will; as employing snares, and wiles, and devices, to seduce and destroy them. Thus, according to our author himself, "The Scripture represents this enemy of all righteousness as having access to the

minds of men, and possessing a power of tempting their hearts, and leading them into all manner of moral evil." Vol. ii. p. 67.—“ He is constantly endeavouring to blind their minds, harden their hearts, and stupify their consciences.” p. 81.— He represents him as capable of suggesting motives, temptations, thoughts, doubts, and arguments to the mind. “ Why is the chain of our thoughts so suddenly broken? Why do new, unconnected, and unexpected thoughts so frequently rush into our minds? Why do thoughts which the mind abhors, and endeavours to banish for ever, so repeatedly and repeatedly recur? These things favour the account which the Scripture gives of Satan’s tempting power over us.” p. 71.—“ He is capable of suggesting the most sophistical arguments against divine revelation. How often does he suggest doubts to the minds of both saints and sinners, respecting the inspiration of the Scriptures? How often does he help the promoters of infidelity to the most plausible and delusive arguments, to pervert the doctrines and subvert the first principles of Christianity? His agency is often very visible in the writings and reasonings of infidels.” p. 76.

Now, with this representation of the Scriptures, as presented by the Doctor himself, his theory is entirely at variance. His theory teaches, that "mind cannot act, any more than matter can move, without a *divine* agency;" that "all their motions, exercises, or actions, must originate from a *divine* efficiency;" that "there must be the exercise of *divine* agency in every human action, without which it is impossible to conceive that God should govern moral agents, and make mankind act in perfect conformity to his designs;" that "this is the only scriptural representation of *divine providence*;" that "his hand is to be seen and acknowledged in every event, without a single exception;" and, that "it is a gross absurdity to suppose, that the *providence* of God is more extensive than his *agency*, or that He ever governs men without exerting a *positive influence* over them."

His theory thus represents God as creating all the actions and events that take place in the minds of men, or of which they are the subjects; and denies, that any of their motions, exercises, or actions can exist unless He creates them. It denies that God could govern men, unless He created all their actions; denies

that the Scriptures, which exhibit His providence as extending to all events, give any representation of it but that; and declares it to be absurd to suppose, that God should govern men, unless He governed them in that way.

Now if the Doctor's theory is true, the Scriptural representation of the agency of the devil on mankind cannot be true. If the providence of God extends to all the actions and events of which men are the subjects; and if He neither does, nor can exercise a providence over them, in any other way, than that of creating all the actions and events of which they are the subjects; then it is not true, according to the Scriptural account, that some of the actions and events of which they are the subjects, as "temptations," "thoughts," "doubts," "sophistical, plausible, and delusive arguments," should be produced by the agency of the devil. The Doctor's theory cuts the devil off from access to the minds and bodies of men, and "quenches all his fiery darts." It is *God* alone, who suggests "temptations," "thoughts," "doubts," "sophistical, plausible, and delusive arguments" to men.— It is "His agency," which "is often very visible in the writings and reasonings of



infidels." There is not a being in the universe more harmless to men, than the devil. "That wicked one" has never touched them. How much soever he may, as a roaring lion, have walked about seeking whom he might devour, he has only beat the air. Men never have been the subjects of an event which the devil's agency produced.

But if the Scriptural representation of the agency of the devil is true, the Doctor's theory is not so; for they contradict each other. There is no avenue of escape from this conclusion. We cannot conceive of any "sophistical, plausible, or delusive arguments," by which to rescue it.

We have too much evidence of the agency of the devil on mankind, to disbelieve it, whatever becomes of the theory we oppose. His agency is not only taught us in the Scriptures, in which "this common enemy of mankind is more frequently mentioned than any other particular person or agent, except the man Christ Jesus; is more than fifty times called the devil; more than forty times Satan; and very often designated by several other names;" in which his history is completely interwoven with the history

of the Saviour, of "our first parents," "Job," "David," "Judas," and "Ananias," (Vol. ii. Sermon 4.) and in which the doctrine of his agency is taught in a great variety of declarations, exhortations, and warnings; but strong proofs of its truth may be seen in other quarters. We think "his agency" is often very visible in the writings and reasonings of presumptuous theorists. And "as he is an acute and subtle reasoner," we are not slow to believe that the credit is due to him, "of helping to the most sophistical" and "most plausible and delusive arguments," employed in aid of false assumptions and monstrous hypotheses.

*Fifthly.* The Doctor's theory entirely divests the actions of men of moral character, and releases mankind from all moral obligation.

It is a first principle in morals, that a being is responsible only for those effects, which are produced by his own power. If any "motions, exercises, or actions," take place in his mind or body, which are produced not by his own, but by the power of some other being, he is not responsible for them; nor is he responsible for any events, of which other beings are the subjects, if those events are not the

production of his, but some other being's power. This truth even the Doctor admits. "No man feels that any motion of body or mind is *his action*, unless his heart is concerned in it. If his eye, or head, or hand, or foot, should move without the concurrence of his heart, he would not call that motion *his action*, nor feel in the least degree accountable for it. Or if his intellectual powers were put in motion, without the choice of his heart, he would not call those mental motions *his actions*, nor feel either praise or blame worthy for them." "The *heart* consists in voluntary exercises," and "volitions are imperative acts of the will, and productive of external actions." Vol. i. p. 337, 338.

"An imperative act, productive of external actions," can be nothing else than an act involving an exertion of power. If that act is an act of the will or heart, then the power exerted in it must be the power of the will or heart, which exerts it. A man, then, according to the Doctor's own admission, does not call any bodily or "mental motions *his actions*, nor feel either praise or blame worthy for them," unless they are the production of his own power. He is utterly exempt from responsibility for any effects which

are produced by the power of other beings.

This representation is undoubtedly according to truth. Men universally distinguish between those effects which they produce by their own power, and those of which they are only the passive subjects; and regard themselves as worthy of praise or blame only for the former. No man feels to blame for the effect which thunder produces on his ear, and lightning on his eye; no man feels worthy of praise for being warm in summer and cold in winter. If a man's eyes are forced open, and objects presented to them, he does not feel responsible for his perceptions. It is the dictate of common sense, that a man is not, and of reason that he cannot be, worthy of praise or blame for any effect which is not produced by his own, but the power of another being; and for the obvious reason, that he is not the agent in producing such an effect, nor in any sense the *cause* of its existence. Let the effect be a perception or sensation; that effect, if it is not produced by his own power, does not owe its existence at all to the man himself, who is the subject of it, any more than a similar effect, of which some one else is

the subject. It is not the consequence, in any sense, of his understanding, or will, or any thing that pertains to him. It came into existence entirely by the agency of another being, and belongs to him, who is the subject of it, in no other sense, than that he is the being in whom it was produced. He is not the agent; any more than Adam was the agent, when a rib was taken from his side by divine power; or than Paul was the agent, when forty stripes, save one, were thrice inflicted on him. The being, who produces the effect, is the agent. It is his power which produces the effect, and it is he who exerts the power. This is the distinction which common sense and reason establish between activity and passivity. A being is active, when he produces effects in himself by his own power; he is passive when effects are produced on him by the power of another being. Since then the man is not the agent of the effect in question, but only the passive subject of that effect, which is produced by another's power, he cannot be worthy of praise or blame for it. The effect does not owe its existence nor its nature to him; and the praise or blame of it therefore cannot be predicated of him, any more than though

he had not been the subject of it. The praise or blame of it can be predicated of the agent only. We trust the common sense and reason of every reader will recognise this, as the true distinction between activity and passivity, and the true line between responsibility and irresponsibility.

The Doctor's theory, therefore, devests the actions of men of moral character entirely, and releases mankind from all responsibility. For it teaches, that *God creates all the actions of men*. Men are entirely destitute of power. None of their actions can come into existence by power belonging to them. They are not in any sense the cause of their actions, and therefore are not agents, nor worthy of praise or blame on account of them.—They are nothing more than passive, irresponsible subjects, in whom those effects are produced by divine power.

The Doctor will, peradventure, deny this conclusion, on the ground, that those effects, which God creates in men, are "voluntary actions," acts of choice, or acts of will. But that does not, in the least, intercept that conclusion. The *nature* of the effects produced in men by the power of God, is not at all concerned in

the question, whether men are *active* or *passive*, as it regards the existence of those effects. If an effect, which we denominate a voluntary action, be produced in a man solely by divine power, that man is as universally and absolutely passive, as it respects that effect, as he is or can be, in respect to any effect, which divine power can create in him. For he is not in any sense the cause of that action. It came into existence entirely without his agency, will, or purpose. He is not in any sense the cause of its *nature*. It is solely the consequence of divine power, that it is a voluntary action, and not an operation of a different kind. It is solely the consequence of divine power, that it is an act of love or of hatred, a choice of this object or of that. There is nothing pertaining to it, of which God is not the sole author. No reason therefore can be assigned, that the man should be regarded the agent of this "voluntary action," any more than of any involuntary effect which might have been produced in him. No reason can be assigned, why he should be responsible for it, any more than for any involuntary effect which might have been produced in him. The action having been produced entirely by

divine power, its being of a particular *kind*, does not constitute the man the agent of it, or render him worthy of praise or blame on account of it. We challenge the Doctor, and the whole host of metaphysicians, with all the “sophistical, plausible, and delusive arguments” in the world, to allege a reason to prove, that a man is the agent of an action, and responsible for it, which is produced solely by divine power, whether that action be denominated a “voluntary action,” or not, that will not prove him to be the agent of any other action or effect, which Omnipotence can produce in him, and equally responsible for it. All effects produced in that manner, whether they are called acts of perception, will, affections, sensations, motions, or any thing else, stand, and must stand, on precisely the same ground. No action can have more than one agent. The action is his, who produces the effect. And all the responsibility, connected with the effect, belongs to him.

The truth is, God cannot *create* a “voluntary action” in a being. It is the most “absolute” impossibility. It would be making *passivity, activity*; and that which is *involuntary, voluntary*; which even Om-



nipotence cannot accomplish. A voluntary action is that of which the being, who is the subject of it, is the agent; and a being is the agent of an action, which he produces, or exerts entirely by his own power. An effect is not voluntary, if the subject of it is not the agent; and the subject of it is not the agent, if he does not produce it wholly by his own power. God therefore cannot *create* a voluntary action in a being; since in order to be voluntary, it must be exerted solely by the power of the being who is the subject of it.

These views of voluntary actions, both Arminians and Calvinists, in all their discussions on moral agency, have, in our apprehension, entertained. We have never regarded it as an agitated question between them, whether the *power*, by which the voluntary actions of men are exerted, was *their* power, or *God's*. They have alike contemplated man as endowed with power to act voluntarily, or exert volitions; and considered his voluntary actions as solely the exertion of his own power, and not of God's. The question disputed by them is, whether his exercise of that power is controlled by any cause. It was not the subject of President Edwards' consideration in the section on

causes, in his Inquiry respecting the Freedom of the Will, whether or not the volitions of men have an *efficient* cause; and whether the power of *men*, or the power of *God*, is that cause. He concurred entirely with Arminians in the unquestionable position, that their volitions have an *efficient cause*, and that *their power* is that cause. The subject disputed between him and Arminians is, whether men are *controlled* in the *exercise* of their *power* by any *cause*. President Edwards took the position, that they are. He proved by infrustrable argumentation, that there must be a cause, that men exert their power in the mode they do, and not in any other mode; that their agency is made up of a given train of volitions, and not of any other train; as much as there is a cause that any thing else, which begins to exist, exists as it does, and not in some other way. What that cause was he did not undertake to determine.\*

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\* We have shown, in the remarks respecting the nature of dependence, that the *immediate cause*, that the mind exerts such a volition as it does, in any given case, is its judgment of the capacity of the objects, which are motives to the volitions, to afford pleasure or pain; and that God is the cause, more or less remotely, of the existence of that judgment. Motives themselves are undoubtedly the cause on occasion that the mind exerts volitions, or exercises its power. Man then, is the *efficient cause* of his volitions, or voluntary exercises; that is, it is

In proving that there must be a cause, that men exercise their power in the mode they do; or that they exert that series of voluntary actions, which make up their agency, and not some other series, he proved, that a ground of certainty exists, previously to their volitions, that their volitions will exist at the time, and in the manner in which they actually do; and thence subverted the reasonings of the Arminians against the Calvinistic doctrines, which involve the existence of such a certainty.

The Arminians, on the other hand, held that men are not controlled in the exercise of their power by any cause; that they possess a self-determining power; that is, the power of exerting their power of acting, in any mode whatever, independently of a control by any external cause. They denied the existence of a certainty or necessity of their acting in a given mode, or exerting a given train of volitions.

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*his power* by which his voluntary actions are exerted. Motives are the cause of his exerting his power in voluntary action; that is, the occasional cause. His judgment of the capacity of the objects, that are motives to afford pleasure or pain, is the occasional cause of his exerting such volitions as he does; that is, exercising his power in the mode he does; and God is the cause, more or less remotely; that is, it is what God does that is the occasion that he forms those judgments respecting the capacities of objects.

The whole course of their controversy demands this construction. The whole subject of difference was the certainty or necessity of men's acting or exercising their power in the mode they do, previously to their acting. They agreed, in regarding men as exerting their actions entirely by their own power; and used the term *agent*, to denote a being who acts by his own power; and *volition*, or *voluntary action*, to denote a being's voluntary exertion of his power, or an act which a being voluntarily exerts by his own power. When therefore President Edwards assumed, that a volition is virtuous or vicious in its own *nature*, and not in its *cause*, he contemplated a volition as exerted by the power of the being who is the subject of the volition; and not by the power of some other being; and thence, regarding the subject of the volition as the *efficient cause* of it, he intended by *the cause* which did not constitute the virtue or vice of the volition, *that cause* which constituted the *ground of certainty* that it would exist, that is, *the cause*, which *governed* the *being's exercise* of his power, or led him to exert that volition. They have thus, in the most explicit manner defined the subject of their controversy; and their views of man

as an agent, and of his voluntary actions as the productions of his own power.—Whoever has not entertained these views when reading their volumes, has never comprehended the design of President Edwards, nor known the nature of the Arminian controversy.

The Doctor therefore cannot assume, as he does in his argument, to prove, that it is agreeable to the nature of holiness to be created; that a volition is virtuous or vicious in its own *nature*, without any consideration whether its *efficient cause* is the being who is the subject of the volition, or another being; since there neither is, nor can be a volition, of which the being in whom it takes place is *not* the efficient cause. It constitutes a part of the *nature* of a volition, that its efficient cause is the being who is the subject of the volition. And he cannot, in order to escape the conclusion, that his theory strips the actions of men of their moral character, and releases mankind from all moral obligation, make the assumption we have supposed him to make, that the actions of men are not divested of their moral character, nor men of their responsibility, because the effects produced in them by divine power, are “voluntary

actions;” since, as has been shown, if a voluntary action were produced in that way, it would be a mere mechanical effect. Thus from the acknowledged principle, that a being is responsible only for those effects which are produced by his own power, or of which he is the efficient cause, it is seen, that the Doctor’s theory subverts the whole foundation of moral obligation.

Again: it is a first principle in morals, that a being, in order to be responsible for his actions, must possess natural power to act otherwise than he does. That is, that he must act from a moral and not from a natural necessity. A being who should act only from a natural or physical necessity, would be a mere machine. The Doctor holds, that men must, in order to be agents, and that they do possess natural power to act otherwise than they do act. “Two things are absolutely necessary in order to men’s acting: one is to be able—the other is to be willing. By being able is meant a natural power to act, and by being willing, a moral power to act.” “When men have natural power to do any thing, they always have natural power to neglect it.” “God knows that men have natural power to

act contrary to his designs." Vol. ii. p. 55. 57. And the ground of this reason is obvious. A being who has not natural power to act otherwise than he does, must act from a physical necessity.— There must be a physical necessity *against* his acting differently from the mode in which he does act; and therefore a physical necessity of his acting as he does act. And if he acts from a physical necessity, he is a mere machine, and not a voluntary agent; since a voluntary agent acts from a moral necessity only, or from mere choice.

The Doctor's theory, therefore, devests the actions of men of their moral nature, and exempts them from all moral obligation. For it represents men as entirely destitute of power; as utterly incapable of acting, except by a divine influence creating all their actions. But if they are universally and absolutely *destitute of power*, they plainly have *no natural power to act otherwise than they do act*; and if they are utterly *incapable of acting but by a divine influence*, they certainly have *no natural power to act otherwise than they are influenced to act*. Natural power to act otherwise than they do act, and than they are influenced, would be natural power to act

without, and in opposition to a divine influence. His theory, therefore, in representing men as destitute of natural power to act otherwise than they do; and as destitute of all power, represents them as mere machines; makes their actions merely mechanical effects, and releases them from all moral obligation.

This is true by his own confession in regard to Adam. "If by being *left* to the freedom of his own will be meant, that God *withdrew* some aid or support which he had given him before, and which was necessary in order to resist temptation; then such a *suspension* of divine aid or support must have excused him for eating the forbidden fruit; since there could have been no criminality in his not resisting temptation, which was above his *natural* power to resist. Vol. i. p. 233. Here the Doctor declares that Adam could not have been criminal in yielding to the temptation, unless he had *natural* power to resist it. And if it be true in his case, it must be so in all others. He also declares, that if God *withdrew* any aid or support from him, which he had given him before, and which was necessary in order to resist temptation; then such a *suspension* of divine aid or support



must have *excused* him for eating the forbidden fruit. But the Doctor's theory represents the *agency* of God as the *sole cause* of Adam's not resisting the temptation, and of his eating the forbidden fruit. For he represents His agency as the sole cause of *all* the actions of men, and of the *nature* of their actions; and thence regards it as such in the case of Adam. And he expressly declares, that "all methods to account for the fall of Adam, *by the instrumentality of second causes*, are insufficient to remove the difficulty;" and that therefore, "it seems necessary to have recourse to the divine agency, and to suppose that *God wrought* in Adam both to will and to do, in his first transgression." "His first sin was a free voluntary exercise produced by a divine operation." Vol. i. p. 231.

But if God *wrought* in Adam in his first transgression, and His agency was the sole cause of his eating the forbidden fruit; and if His agency was also the sole cause of all his previous actions, then in his transgression God must have *withdrawn* from Adam some aid or support given him before, and necessary to resist the temptation. For as the agency of God was the sole cause of his actions, the *na-*

ture of the divine agency must have been the sole cause of the *nature* of his actions; and thence a *difference* in the divine agency must have been the cause of the *difference* in his actions; and God, therefore, in exerting on him that different agency, which produced transgression, *withdrew* from him some aid and support which He had previously given him, and which was necessary to resist temptation.

And since, then, according to the Doctor, "such a *suspension*," or withdrawal, "of divine aid or support, must have *excused* him for eating of the forbidden fruit," the Doctor's theory, in teaching that God *did withdraw* from him His aid or support in that manner, entirely releases Adam from moral obligation, and divests his transgression of all moral character. And if this be true of Adam in that case, it is equally true of him and all mankind, in respect to every one of their actions.

But men are not thus mere machines. We have the testimony of the Doctor, that "it is undoubtedly true, that we are all *conscious* of activity; and *intuitively know*, that we are free moral agents." Vol. i. p. 215. The Doctor's theory, therefore, which represents men as mere machines, is altogether erroneous.

*Sixthly.* According to the Doctor's theory, God is the only agent of the actions of men, and their praise and blame belongs to Him only. His theory is therefore incorrect.

It is a first principle, that the efficient cause or agent of an action is alone responsible for it. He alone gives it existence; he alone gives it its nature. If its nature is such that it is vicious, he is the sole cause of its viciousness, and its vice belongs to him. If its nature is such that it is virtuous, he is the sole cause of its virtue, and its virtue belongs to him. Its virtue or vice can no more be predicated of any other being, than the agency can which produced it. For to predicate virtue or vice, praise or blame, of a being, is nothing else than to predicate the action which involves the virtue or vice, praise or blame, of him as the agent. No being can be conceived to be worthy of praise or blame for an action, unless he is the agent of that action. To deny that a being is the agent of an action, the praise or blame of which is predicated of him, is to deny that the praise or blame belongs to him; and to deny that the praise or blame of an action belongs to the being

who is the agent of that action, is to deny that he is the agent of that action.

That being is the agent of an action, who is the efficient cause of that action; that is, owns and exerts the power which produces the action, or of which the action is an exertion. The agent is the being who acts; and the being who acts, is he who exerts the power which is exerted in acting. We have the Doctor's testimony to this effect: "Two things are absolutely necessary in order to men's acting; one is, to be able. By being able, is meant a natural power to act." That is, a man cannot act unless he has power to act. But there is no need of his possessing power, unless that power is exerted in acting. A man cannot act then, unless he possesses power, and exerts it in acting; and "no man is capable of doing that which he has not natural power to do." That is, a man is not capable of acting in a given way, unless he has power to act in that way; that is, unless he possess power, and exert it in acting.

According to the Doctor's theory, therefore, God is the only agent of the actions of men, and their praise and blame belongs to Him alone. For his theory represents God alone as possessing power.

Power, according to his theory, is omnipotence, and an incommunicable attribute of the Deity. Men neither do, nor can possess it, and therefore neither are nor can be agents. It is *divine power* which produces all their actions. God exerts that power alone; and is therefore the agent and only agent of their actions. And as He is the only agent, He is the only *moral* agent; and all the praise and blame of their actions belong solely to Him. Men are therefore universally and absolutely passive in all their actions, and universally and absolutely exempt from praise and blame.

Such is the frightful conclusion to which this theory conducts us. God is the only agent in the world. Men are mere machines, destitute of power and destitute of responsibility. God is not only the Author of all the holiness in the world, but all the holiness in the world is His. He is the only holy being. And He is not only the Author of all the sin in the world, but it is all His likewise. He is the only sinful being. Men are totally deceived in the belief that they are agents, and that they are holy and sinful, worthy of praise and blame. If this theory be true, God's government is de-

ceitful and unjust. He reaps where He has not sown, and gathers where He has not strawed. All the happiness He bestows, as the reward of holiness, is no more merited by those who receive it, than it is by others, and no more appropriately bestowed on them than it would be on others. The misery he inflicts as the reward of sin is utterly unmerited, and might with equal justice and propriety be inflicted on any other beings! We have sat down to many metaphysical dishes prepared by theorising philosophers and theologians, but never before to one which meditated such horrible results as these.

We might add other proofs that this theory is devoid of truth. We might direct the eye of the reader to the numerous contradictions which it involves—such as, that men have power, and have no power; are agents, and are not agents; are free, and are not free in their agency; are worthy, and are not worthy of praise and blame; and also the contradictions to other parts of the Doctor's volumes, which it involves; such as, that the devil exerts, and does not exert an influence on men; that the agency of the Holy Spirit on men is a peculiar agency, and

is not so; &c. &c. But it is unnecessary. What further need have we of witnesses? We apprehend that we have both refuted the arguments employed by the Doctor to support his theory, and demonstrated the theory to be groundless.

Let us now turn to some of the baleful consequences which must result from this theory being publicly taught, by the ministers of the gospel, as a part of revealed theology.

I. It will render their discourses contradictory, and thence tend to destroy the confidence of their hearers in their instructions.

No man can preach this theory, and preach the gospel of the grace of God too, without entangling himself in the most gross and appalling contradictions. The theory is palpably self-contradictory; and it breathes out threatenings and slaughter against every part of the gospel. Does its teacher preach that God creates all the actions of men? He denies that, when he preaches that men are agents, and their actions their own. Does he teach, that men are absolutely destitute of power, and incapable of acting but by a divine efficiency? He contra-

dicts that, when he asserts that men have power to act, and must have power in order to act. Does he announce to his hearers, that men can no more act than matter can move, without a divine efficiency? He retracts that, or addresses to them the grossest insult, when he calls on them to repent, believe, love, and obey; and presents the promise of heaven to allure, and the threatening of perdition to constrain. Does he hold, that men have natural power to act otherwise than they do act? He falsifies that, when he teaches that they cannot act except by a divine efficiency. Is it a part of his creed, that the agency of the Spirit on men is a peculiarity of the work of redemption? He abandons that position when he assumes that the agency of God is concerned in precisely the same manner in the wrong as in the right actions of men. Is it a part of his faith, that "the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about seeking whom he may devour;" has "access to the minds of men," is "capable of leading them into all manner of moral evil," and is employed in suggesting to them "temptations," "motives," "thoughts," "doubts," and in "helping" them to "the most sophisticated" and "most plausible



and delusive arguments?" He exculpates the devil from all this, when he teaches that God, who creates all the actions of men, is the only agent by whom men are influenced. Does he hold that men are responsible for their conduct, and that the praise and blame of their actions belongs entirely to them? His theory contradicts that, and transfers all their virtue and vice to God. These contradictions and others, to which the theory leads, are obvious and palpable. They are so flagrant that a hearer must be exceedingly stupid, not to perceive them; for these dogmas of the theory contradict the dictates of common sense, the decisions of reason, and the doctrines of revelation.

Now to publish such contradictions from the desk, must tend entirely to dispossess the hearer of confidence in his teacher. It will force him either to regard his instructor as incompetent to understand religion, or as dishonest, or to consider the Gospel as made up of "things hard to be understood." No man can be believed to comprehend a subject which he cannot teach with consistency.

Not a few of mankind are disposed to charge the inconsistencies of the teachers.

of religion to religion itself; and to shelter themselves under that persuasion from all rebukes of conscience for their neglect to understand its doctrines, and their disregard of its known truths.

This course of preaching naturally makes shipwreck of the hearer's confidence in the teacher. The hearer sees, that he is not fairly treated; that he is perpetually plunged into artificial perplexities; that what is simple, is confounded; and what is true, is involved in doubt. He becomes averse to the *man*; a film of prejudice spreads itself over his eye, discolouring even the truths which are taught, and depriving them of power to delight or persuade. The preacher's influence dies away. He robs the Gospel of its consistency and dignity, and himself of the respect and trust which his office properly procures him. He is viewed with the irreverence and distrust which other men incur, who are inconsistent in their principles, and erroneous in their reasonings; and his ministry, not "commending itself to every man's conscience in the sight of God," is unfruitful.

Nor will he have much occasion to assume to himself the credit of it, if some of his hearers are not driven by his ministry

into the regions of infidelity. There are minds which are more easily plunged into the gulf of skepticism by what in their apprehension is contradictory or incomprehensible in religion, than by any thing else; and a ministry, in which this theory is taught, would, in our judgment, furnish "the devil" with ample materials from which he could "help" such minds "to the most sophisticated, plausible, and delusive arguments to pervert the doctrines, and subvert the first principles of Christianity."

The preaching of this theory will not produce these effects in every individual; but the laws of human nature assure us it will in some. Were we able to cast our eye over the congregations, in which it has been taught, and trace its influence, we doubt not, that we should detect many minds, whose history we have delineated.

II. The preaching of this theory must tend to produce a contentious disposition in the community, and to propagate dissensions and sectarianism in the Church. No man can teach it in such a manner as to command the faith of all. There are, in every congregation, some whose common sense is too discerning, not to reject its contradictory dogmas; and whose understand-

ing is too sound, not to detect the fallacy of the reasonings, by which it is attempted to be sustained. However it may be with the multitude, there are many, who will not decide without investigation, nor believe without evidence; and neither those who reject, nor those who embrace the theory, will regard their decision as of slight consequence. It is a question of pre-eminent consequence, and fitted more than almost any other, to arouse the sensibilities. Who can be indifferent, when gravely called by a teacher of religion to decide whether he is a moral agent, or a machine; and whether justice or injustice is the habitation of God's throne?

Those who, departing from the common paths of speculation, descry, as they imagine, some truth, "which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men," and broach new doctrines, are prone to regard their peculiar views as the most important portion of the Gospel, and to contend for them more "earnestly" than "for the faith once delivered to the saints."—Teachers, who "have sought out such inventions," feel constrained by the upbraidings of conscience, and the yearnings of philanthropy, to address themselves immediately to the "wood, hay,

and stubble" of their systems, and "omit the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, faith," "and the love of God." The very quintessence of religion is, in their apprehension, embodied in their peculiar dogmas; and the ark is in jeopardy till they are embraced with "all lowliness and meekness." They therefore perpetually drag them before the public eye, and struggle to beat down other systems, and give support to their own. The natural influence of such a course of preaching is to "gender strifes" "about words to no profit, but to the subverting of the hearers." They are brought to "dote about questions, and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, railings, evil surmisings, perverse disputings." A pugnacious, sectarian spirit is generated. One is of Paul, one of Apollos, and another of Cephas, till Christ "is left alone." The cry is raised, "Who is on the Lord's side? Put every man his sword by his side, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbour." The advocates of the theory "breathe out threatening and slaughter" against their adversaries, as "unorthodox," mere "heretics," "sons of Belial," "men who hold the truth in un-

righteousness." In the mean time, the meekness and gentleness of Christ are extinguished. Severity, dogmatism, a spirit of unsparing condemnation become prominent features of the character. Religion is transformed into "vain babblings," "foolish and unlearned questions," "contentions and strivings about the law," and "giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men that turn from the truth." The theory is made the standard of orthodoxy. Every man is stretched upon that bed; and if "found wanting" in exact coincidence with it, is rejected as an heretic. Faith in it, is made the test of piety; and on the presumption, that without *that* faith it is impossible to please God, all who do not possess it, are cast "without" among "dogs and sorcerers." None but "the thorough going," to use their own language, are "sound in the faith."

On the other hand, those who reject the theory, are aroused to more warmth and severity in defending their opinions; and are fortunate if they do not, in the contention, revert into the opposite error. Hot disputation always produces extremes. Some, who would otherwise have "held fast the form of

sound words," retreat into *low* Calvinism. Multitudes people the regions of Arminianism. Unitarianism here and there culls a disciple. And many, disgusted with religious contentions, resolve to "live without God and without hope in the world."

It needs not the eye of prophecy to discover that these must be the consequences of such a course of preaching. Any one, who has read a single chapter of human nature, may see that they are inevitable. We appeal to the ministers who have taught this theory; we appeal to the congregations who have heard it, whether we have not accurately depicted the history of their experience. If we wished to discover the most deperate votaries of error, Arminians, Unitarians, Universalists, Swedenborgians, Nothingarians, we would search for them in the region where this theory has prevalence. If we wished to find a region, where piety is chilled and stunted by contention, and religion is resolved into abstract speculation, we should turn our eye to that.

The advocates of this theory are a *sect*, and as distinctly defined, and as tenacious of their peculiarities as any sect whatever. It is thence natural to expect that they will avail themselves of all prac-

licable means to give currency to their views and supremacy to their party; that their ministers will associate with each other more intimately than with those who dissent from their creed; and that their members in vacant congregations will demand that their sentiments should prevail, and make a difference between their own and the opinions of candidates for settlement, a ground of rejecting them.

The question of their settlement, it may be expected, will in many places come to depend on their views of this theory, and the gates of the sanctuary be barred against those who cannot embrace and teach its revolting dogmas. We appeal to the common sense of all whether these consequences are not to be apprehended. We appeal to those whose condition has allowed them to notice the influence of this theory, whether facts of this kind have not often passed under their eye.

Are not these things to be deprecated? Is it a matter of small consequence, that the Church is rent with divisions; that "the meekness and gentleness of Christ" are supplanted by the bitterness of contention and the zeal of party; that sectarianism and error are propagated; and



that faith in this theory is made a test of qualification for the ministry, and the ground of the decision whether or not men shall be admitted to its labours?

III. The prevalence of this theory must prepare the way for the reception of other human doctrines. It rests entirely, as we have seen, on the authority of the Doctor. He has not obtained the aid of either common sense, reason, or revelation to support it; but all these unite their testimony against it. Now the success of one innovation of the truth prepares the way for the success of others. Those who yield their faith to the mere authority of men in one instance, do not surprise us when they yield it in others. If their common sense is not sufficiently vigorous to preserve them within the limits of rational belief; if they fail to distinguish those subjects, of which a knowledge may be obtained from human testimony, from those of which our knowledge must be derived entirely from God; if they overlook the distinction between assertions and proofs, "the most sophistical arguments," and the most fair, we are prepared to see them "make shipwreck concerning the faith," and "blown about," the mere disciples of men, "by every

wind of doctrine." Whatever is presented to them with a show of proof, recommended by novelty and enforced with a dogmatical, authoritative air, is a fair candidate for their unwavering faith.

Now we cannot but regard the disciples of this theory as exposed to this danger. They have called a *man* their *Father* upon the earth. They have made him their oracle. They have reposed the same confidence in his testimony as in the testimony of God sustained by miracles and prophecies. They have on his authority believed dogmas, which all the miracles and prophecies of revelation could never prove to be true, while such things as impossibilities have no existence. What then shall prevent them from yielding their faith to other human doctrines, which chance may bring within their knowledge? We cannot conceive that either human sagacity or obtuseness can devise a scheme, that shall involve grosser contradictions to itself, and to the truth, than are embodied in this theory. We cannot conceive that sophistry itself can furnish a selection of more "sophistical arguments" to sustain any doctrine, than those are on which this theory leans for support. .No doc-

trine can be offered to their consideration, which for abundance of contradiction and dearth of proof, can present more formidable obstacles to their credence, than this theory presented.

We cannot feel surprised, therefore, should we behold the votaries of this theory exchanging it for some other commandment of men, commended by its novelty, abstruseness, dogmatism, or sophistry. We shall not be surprised, should we see some giving their credulity to the winds, and retreating into the region of universal skepticism; and others beguiled by the craft of unitarian philosophy: some, abandoning a creed of terror and denunciation for the elysian dreams of Universalism; and others plunging into the gulf of Swedenborgian mysticism and licentiousness. Not because we regard this theory as at all resembling those errors in its principles; nor because we suspect the teachers and advocates of it as at all friendly to those errors; but simply because they are the disciples of a *man*, and have given him "dominion over their faith." We doubt not that many, who teach and who embrace this theory, are men of eminent piety, sense, and learning; but we cannot per-

suade ourselves, that either their learning, sense, or piety, contributed much to their faith in this theory; and they will please to excuse us, if, when we behold them embarked on the tide of error, we cannot refrain from indulging the apprehension, that they may not prove invincible by the influence of its ebbs and counter currents.

IV. The publication of this theory is obviously calculated to lead men to adopt views most injurious to God, and dangerous to themselves.

There are many persons, especially among the young, who, from early education, from their confidence in the public teachers of religion, and the faith of those around them, will be led to a loose persuasion that the theory is true, and yet will be forced by their common sense and reason to the conclusion, that it blots out the morality of their actions, and annihilates their responsibility. What views then will they naturally form of God and themselves? Will they, after being convinced that God creates all their actions, be prepared to believe that they act voluntarily, and are not machines? Will they, after being taught that they can no more act than matter can move without

a divine efficiency, be prepared to listen to the voice of the divine law, requiring them to act and to obey, without any gift of the necessary influence? Will they, after being assured that the agency of God is concerned in precisely the same manner in their wrong as in their right actions, be as ready to believe, that the effects of that agency are of such a nature, that the one class justly advances those who are the subjects of them to eternal life; and the other class precipitates those in whom they are produced, into the gulf of eternal death? Will they, by having been inducted into the several mysteries of this theory, be fitted to be taught, that God is "righteous in all His ways, and holy in all His works;" that His government is "just and good;" or to listen to proofs of their depravity and ill desert? Will not the conclusion inevitably present itself, that God is "an hard master, reaping where He has not sown, and gathering where He has not strawed?" that men are the victims of universal delusion? and that the blessings of salvation are too ~~precious~~ to awaken hope, and the way to heaven too dark to be explored? Will they not avail themselves of the palliation of their guilt, sur-

*precious*

nished by the doctrine of the theory that they are powerless machines, as an excuse for abandoning the purpose of reformation? Will they not be led to conceive of God as an almighty and inflexible enemy, whose love they have no assurance they can conciliate, and whose wrath they have no certainty they can avoid; and give themselves up, therefore, to the licentious, unprincipled rein of fatalism? If this theory is not admirably adapted to release a certain class of mankind from the restraints of religion, to disarm their consciences, and give them license and appetite to "commit iniquity with greediness," we have totally misread the volume of human nature; and when it shall be proved, will confess ourselves to have been "in great fear, where no fear was." Men who wish an excuse for sin, may certainly find it in this theory; and we have never yet discovered, that "the bands of the wicked" were slow to discern, or negligent to embrace, any "plausible and delusive" means of silencing the monitions of conscience, and casting the veil of justification over guilt.

We are not apprehensive that these unhappy consequences will result to every individual, or extensively to every con-

gregation, on whom the theory is successfully inculcated. We are aware that the truths of the Gospel intermingled with it, and taught in connexion with it, and the influence of common sense, will, to a great extent, intercept its deleterious influence. Such is the fact with all errors. Their influence is repressed and modified by opposing influences. A small share of truth often does much to neutralize a large mass of error. Yet after all, error has a proportion of influence. We see in every sect, traits of character corresponding to the peculiarities of their creed; and shall not fear that we risk our credit for discernment in expressing the apprehension, that this theory will, more or less abundantly, produce these consequences as its natural fruits. We appeal to those who have witnessed its influence, whether experience has not already evinced the propriety of our apprehensions.

The Doctor has probably been betrayed into the invention, as far as he is the author of it, and the publication of this theory as a part of revealed theology, as is the case with most errorists, by forgetting the duty of confining his public instructions, in respect to facts, to the *facts* which the Scriptures *reveal*, and not ven-

turing to inculcate, nor attempting to construct, theories of the *mode* in which those facts exist. The sacred volume presents us with nothing, in respect to facts, but a simple statement that certain facts *exist*. It conveys to us no intelligence whatever respecting the *modus operandi* of God, of men, or of other causes, by which those facts come into existence. And it is the business of the minister of religion to teach those truths, and those alone, which he is taught by the volume of Revelation. The Gospel of the grace of God comprises the whole of his commission as an ambassador for Christ. The question about the *modus existentiae et operandi*, is a mere question of philosophy. The mode of God's agency on mankind, in either their holy or sinful conduct, has no more connexion with revealed theology, than the mode of His agency on matter. The minister who ventures to construct and inculcate a theory respecting it, is chargeable with mistaking the business of his office, and assuming that of the mere philosopher, as much as though he gave a theory of electricity, or craniology. It was not the purpose of God, that men should learn the *modus existentiae et operandi* from Revelation. He has confined



His revelation to those truths, a knowledge of which is necessary or useful to them, as the subjects of His government. He has revealed those facts respecting His being, character, purposes, will, and agency, and those only, which need to be known, in order to obedience and salvation.

The insatiable curiosity of men asks, How there exists a threefold distinction in the divine nature, which constitutes a proper foundation for the personal titles, Father, Word, and Spirit, and for their several agencies, while yet they are but one God, and one Being? But God, in place of gratifying that curiosity, merely reveals the *fact* that such a distinction exists, and leaves its *nature* unknown.

An insatiable and irreverent curiosity asks, How the Word was united to the man Jesus, so as to lay a proper foundation for the personal titles and agency ascribed to the complex nature. But God, revealing only the *fact* that such a union existed, leaves the *mode* unknown.

A restless curiosity asks, How does God govern the universe, so as, in respect to all events, to execute His purposes, and yet leave intelligent beings to act as moral agents? But God only reveals the

*fact* that He exercises such a government, and leaves the *mode* unknown.

A presumptuous curiosity asks, How are the dead raised, and with what bodies do they come? But God only reveals the *fact* that they are to be raised, and leaves the *mode* unknown.

And a presumptuous curiosity asks, How does the Holy Spirit act on the mind in turning it from sin to holiness? But God only reveals the *fact*, that the Holy Spirit influences the mind in the work of renovation and sanctification, and leaves the *mode* unknown.

A knowledge of the modes of these several facts, if indeed they are such that we are capable of knowing them, could be of no utility to us as subjects of God's government. It could neither alter our views of His character, nor furnish any new motives to love and obey him. And God, therefore, has not made any provision, by revealing it, for the gratification of a vain desire to comprehend what can make us neither better nor happier.

Since, then, God has confined His revelation to a simple statement of facts, the ministers of that revelation are bound to confine their instructions to those facts. "Secret things belong unto God." The

things which "are *revealed*," are all that belong "to us and to our children." If any, persuading themselves that infinite wisdom in giving a revelation has overlooked things essential to its perfection, attempt to complete the work, by adding their own "psalm," or "doctrine," or "revelation," or "interpretation," they "intrude into things which they have not seen," and fall into "the snare of the devil." What are all the theories of men respecting the *modes* of revealed facts worth? They do not yield us any knowledge of God, or His agency. They are the fictions of the imagination, not indubitable deductions from known truth. They do not break off the fetters of our ignorance, nor aid our ascent to heaven. Instead of enlightening, they obscure; in place of aiding piety, they obstruct it by giving perplexity, or endanger it by inspiring presumption. What are all the theories of men respecting the *mode* of God's agency on mankind worth? Have they imparted any knowledge on the subject? Have any of them been sustained by any evidence? Have any had the praise of not contradicting many important truths? Have not some virtually

denied the agency of God, and some the agency of men? Have not some cast a cloud of discouragement over piety, and some given the rein to licentiousness; and have not all tended to embarrass and confound? What better effects have resulted from the Doctor's theory? Are he and his hearers, and his disciples, any wiser on the subject than others?

These theories of the *modus existentiae et operandi*, are the field where, in every age, fancy has revelled and dogmatism ravaged; but over which religion has wept, as the stumbling place of many of her children, and the grave of many of their joys and hopes. They have produced incalculable mischief to the Church in every period of her existence. They began in the days of the apostles, in the inquiry, "How are the dead raised, and with what bodies do they come?" And what of consequence were the heresies of the Gnostics and preceding sects, but theories respecting the *modes* of things, designed to accommodate the doctrines of the Gospel to those of the philosophy and mythology of the heathen? To what did the contention respecting the Son's eternal generation relate, but the mode of the

divine existence? And on what rock but that is it, that the Arian and Socinian make shipwreck of the faith? On what have all the objections to the doctrine of God's agency on mankind by His Spirit, or of His providential government, rested, but on theories of the *mode* of His agency, exhibiting it as subversive of the moral freedom of man? And to what else have the errors and contentions of Pelagians and Arminians related?

Men have not been satisfied with "the wisdom which is from above." It has not satiated the thirst of curiosity, nor afforded sufficient scope for the revels of fancy. They have chosen to "draw water out of their own cistern," and have done it at the expense of immersing the Church in a sea of broils and persecutions. Who can appreciate the injuries which have resulted from their theories to the cause of Christ? And who, let us ask, can estimate the injury which may result to the cause of Christ, from the inculcation of a theory like that we have been considering? Who can estimate the injury to the Church which may arise from teaching, as a part of revealed theology, a mere fiction of the imagination? Jesus Christ

reprobated the Jewish teachers for inculcating the traditions of the elders. We reproach the Roman Catholic for inculcating the "doctrine of devils," of purgatory, and transubstantiation. We are shocked at the impiety of Swedenborg, in publishing his dreams, as the visions of inspiration. May it not be equally injurious to the Church, to exhibit the Gospel as teaching a religion of paradoxes and contradictions, and subverting all the foundations of belief, by divesting the dictates of consciousness, of common sense, and reason, of their authority? May not more than an ordinary injury arise from teaching a system of religion, professedly derived from the Scriptures, which represents men to be mere machines, and God as pretending to exercise over them, as machines, a moral government; as infinitely loving some of their actions, which He creates, and infinitely hating others; as giving His Son; in the exercise of boundless grace, to redeem them from that guilt which He created in them, and His Spirit to transform them from that character in which He created them; and as assigning to some, on account of their characters, the re-

ward of eternal life, and to others the retribution of eternal death; a scheme which exhibits God as the only agent in the universe, and the author of all the holiness and sin which are predicated of creatures? May it not involve more than a common injury to the cause of Christ to teach, as a part of the Gospel, a scheme which thus justifies the guilt of men, and encourages their depravity? And may it not inflict on it more than a slight injury too, to induce others to embrace and inculcate such a scheme, and to involve the children of God, as this theory may, in error—darken their views of God—perplex their hopes, and obstruct them with the temptations of doubt, disputation, and strife?

If the Ministers of the Gospel are responsible for the evil consequences to the cause of Christ, which result from their dereliction of duty; may it not become the Doctor to reflect, whether weighty responsibilities may not be devolved on him by the publication of this theory?—Let us not be understood as impeaching his motives. We have neither reason nor inclination to do that. We only wish his caution had equalled his zeal; and that we had as satisfactory evidence of his

wisdom, as we have of his conscientiousness. In attempting to explore this subject, he has ventured beyond the legitimate bounds of human investigation.— Without the light of Revelation, it is inscrutable to us; and God, by not granting us any revelation respecting it, has sufficiently indicated that he neither requires nor wishes us to attempt its comprehension. “We cannot by searching find out God. We cannot find out the Almighty unto perfection.” “His ways are not as our ways, nor his thoughts as our thoughts; for as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are his ways higher than our ways, and his thoughts than our thoughts.”

Should the Doctor deem our remarks worthy of a public notice, we hope, that from regard to his reputation, and a desire to give the victory to truth, he will present us with something possessing more of sound argumentation than that which we have been called to consider. We assure him we hold a mere assertion “a vain thing for safety;” that a *petitio principii* will never convince us; and that the “illusions of sophistry will, in our eye, only render a desperate cause more desperate. If he will vindicate his theo-



ry, he shall receive our loudest applause. If he will show, that we have committed any essential error in the statement of his theory, or that the arguments, by which we have opposed it, are "sophistical," merely "plausible and delusive," he shall receive our unfeigned thanks. We have endeavoured on all occasions to discriminate between those consequences which he deduces from the theory, and those which we believe legitimately follow from it; and we doubt not that he, were he convinced that these consequences are fairly deduced, would reject it with as much abhorrence as we do.

We have not been prompted to this work by the apprehension, that his theory was likely, unless formally refuted, to enjoy a very wide or permanent currency. We have ever regarded it as destined to only a brief existence. It rests on too slight a foundation, and is fraught with too gross absurdity, and too deleterious a tendency, to triumph long over the sense and piety of the Church. We have imagined we long since beheld symptoms of its decline, in the desertion of some, who were once its warm advocates, and the fluctuation of others.

If by these pages we shall call to it the

attention of those, who are the guardians of the public faith, and arouse their exertions to suppress it; if we shall reveal its character to some, who had not detected its erroneousness, nor suspected its injurious influence; if we shall convince some, who have embraced it, that they have departed from "the faith once delivered to the saints;" and shall thereby contribute to its earlier extinction; especially should we be so happy as to persuade the Doctor himself, that in his views of human dependence, he has mistaken the suggestions of fancy for the dictates of reason, and thence been betrayed into erroneous views of the language of Revelation, and incorrect argumentation from it; we shall regard ourselves as having performed a work not unuseful to the Church, nor unfriendly to him. We confess ourselves to have been often both much instructed and delighted with many portions of his discourses, and deem them worthy a frequent perusal; and persuade ourselves we cannot make him a more benevolent return, than to assist him to abandon what is incorrect, and expunge what is injurious.



A  
REFUTATION

OF

**THE VIEWS**

ENTERTAINED BY

ADVOCATES OF DR. EMMONS'S THEORY,

RESPECTING

**The Necessity**

OF THE

MORAL EVIL EXISTING IN THE UNIVERSE,

TO A

DISPLAY OF THE DIVINE GLORY



## REFUTATION, &c.



MANY, and perhaps all the advocates of the theory which has passed under our review, hold, as an obvious inference from the views it exhibits of the agency of God in giving existence to sin, that the moral evil which exists in the universe is necessary to the glory of God by a *natural* necessity.

We are taught by the voice both of reason and revelation, that His own glory is the end pursued by the Most High in all His works; and His attributes, infinite knowledge, goodness, and power, present to us a certainty that He pursues in all His agency a course adapted in a perfect manner to secure that end. His knowledge being perfect, He discerns; His goodness being boundless, he must choose; and His power being unlimited, He is able to execute that scheme of agency which shall give existence to a perfect system of materials, consisting of inanimate objects, animals, intelligent beings, and events, for the promotion of His

glory. The whole scheme of His agency in calling into existence and controlling His works; and the whole series of events, natural and moral, of which, under His providential and moral government His works are the subjects, constitute a system of materials perfectly adapted to glorify Him; and the result is as large a sum of glory as could arise from any system of agency He could pursue.

From these premises, and from the peculiar views exhibited by Doctor Emmons's theory of the mode of God's agency on mankind, the inference is drawn by advocates of that theory, that the moral evil existing in the universe is necessary to the glory of God, by a natural necessity; that in a system of materials perfectly adapted to glorify God, moral evil must be a constituent, and to precisely the extent to which it actually exists, and shall exist in the universe; that from its *nature* it is the best material to occupy such a portion of the system; and that neither moral good, nor any thing else, could be substituted in its place, without deteriorating the system, and preventing a perfect display of the divine glory.

To sustain this position, they advance an argument like the following :

The Most High has chosen a plan of procedure which will glorify Him in a perfect manner. But He has chosen a plan which involves the existence of such a sum of moral evil. He must therefore have chosen that plan, because such a sum of moral evil is necessarily a constituent in a system of means to glorify Him in a perfect manner. And since God creates all the actions holy and sinful of mankind, that sum of moral evil must be necessary by a natural necessity, or a necessity arising from its nature, and not merely by a moral necessity. For if it were necessary only by a moral necessity, that is, if its necessity did not arise from its nature, and it were, in that respect, no better adapted to glorify God than moral good, but its necessity arose entirely from the disposition of men to exercise sin instead of holiness; then what reason could be assigned for God's creating that disposition? It is He who creates the disposition and constitutes the moral necessity. We must look, therefore, for the reason of His constituting that moral necessity, not in the moral necessity itself, but in something antecedent to it; and that can be nothing else than the nature of moral evil. If moral

evil is in its nature no better a material than moral good for occupying that portion of the system of means for promoting His glory, no reason can be discerned for His creating it as a part of the system, instead of moral good. If moral evil had not been a better means than moral good to attain the end, then as moral evil is the object of His hatred and moral good the object of His love, He must have chosen to employ moral good instead of evil. But He has created moral evil instead of good. He must have done it therefore, because from its nature it is a better means than moral good to occupy such a portion of the general system; because it is an indispensable constituent in a perfect system: that is, because it is necessary by a natural necessity.

And from these views of the necessity of moral evil, as a means of displaying the divine glory, some important conclusions are drawn respecting the feelings with which moral evil is to be contemplated. Thus it is inferred, that as moral evil is a good to the Most High, and not an evil, a benefit to His kingdom and not an injury; it is a subject of joy and not of regret that it exists. It is argued that it is supremely desirable, that a perfect display should be made of the divine glory;



and a subject of the highest joy, that God is displaying it by a system of means, which is perfectly adapted to display it in such a manner. And as moral evil constitutes of necessity a part of that system, it is a subject of joy that it exists. Since God has chosen to create and employ it as a means of displaying His glory, we should rejoice that He creates and employs it for that purpose. As we should rejoice in the existence of the end, we should equally rejoice in the existence of the means of attaining that end. All mankind, therefore, contemplating moral evil as an instrument of displaying the divine glory, are bound not to regret, but to rejoice at its existence. Each individual is bound to rejoice that he is himself the subject of that exact sum of moral evil of which he is the subject; and that he shall hereafter be the subject of precisely that additional sum of it of which he shall be the subject; and is bound also to rejoice, that all other sinful beings are the subjects of precisely that amount of moral evil of which they are the subjects.

And since the existence of moral evil is thus a subject of joy, evangelical repentance or godly sorrow for sin cannot consist, to any extent, in sorrow for the

*existence* of sin. The godly sorrow of a person for his sins cannot at all involve any sorrow that he committed those sins; but is perfectly consistent with joy, that they came into existence, and that he committed them.

That these conclusions follow irresistibly from the position, that moral evil is necessary to the divine glory by a natural necessity, none can be at a loss to decide; nor, it would seem to us, can any who contemplate them with an unprejudiced eye, be at a loss to decide, that they and the position from which they are deduced, are essentially erroneous; at variance with the dictates of reason; inconsistent with the actual views and feelings of the children of God when exercising godly sorrow for sin; and licentious in their tendency.

If such be in fact their nature, should we succeed in an attempt to subvert that position, and intercept these conclusions from it, we shall perform a task, we trust, not unwelcome to such who have adopted these sentiments; and should we be successful in endeavouring to collect additional light on a subject hitherto less perfectly understood than many other parts of theology, the task, we hope, will

not be uninteresting nor unprofitable to the Church. And such will be the result of our attempt, if we are able to establish the following proposition:

*Did mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, yield a perfect obedience to the divine government, their obedience would constitute as good materials as their disobedience does for a perfect display of the divine glory; and the same sum of glory would result to the Most High from the system of events, which would then exist, as redounds to Him from the system of events which now exists.*

The proposition is restricted to *mankind*, for the convenience of confining our reasonings to them. If it be established in regard to them, it is equally applicable to all other sinful beings.

It is proper to remark, in order that the proposition may not be misapprehended, that we do not mean by it, that *any* obedience whatever from mankind would constitute as good materials for displaying the divine glory, as their present disobedience does; but we mean a perfect obedience, yielded in precisely the circumstances in which they stand in yielding their disobedience. An obedience rendered in other circumstances, as in circumstances of much less tempta-

tion, or of entire exemption from temptation, would be of much less value, than an obedience in those circumstances in which they are now placed. In order to be of the value required by the proposition, their obedience must be rendered in the precise circumstances in which mankind are now placed.

By yielding an obedience in the circumstances in which they are placed, is meant,

*First.* Their yielding an obedience with only that quantity of means or of influence, which is now employed by the Most High to excite them to obedience: that is, with precisely that quantity of knowledge of the Divine Being, of His will, of their obligations, and of the consequences of their conduct; and with precisely that quantity of means to enforce on them that knowledge, and prompt them to comply with their obligations, which is now employed to excite them to obedience. Were they in this respect placed in circumstances different from those in which they are now placed, namely, circumstances in which a much more powerful influence should be employed to excite them to obedience; as their circumstances would be essentially

changed, the value of their obedience would be changed also, and the proposition would then be inapplicable to them.

*Secondly.* By their yielding obedience in the circumstances in which they are placed, is also meant, their yielding obedience while subjected to precisely that amount of difficulties, or of influence operating to deter them from obedience, to which they are now subjected; namely, that precise quantity of temptation or excitement to sin, arising from ignorance, passion, the examples and persuasions of men, the adversary, and other sources, to which they are now subjected. Were they, in this respect, placed in circumstances of less difficulty than those in which they are now placed, that is, in which they would be subjected to a much less quantity of excitement to sin; their obedience would be of much less value, than an obedience in the circumstances in which they are now placed; and the proposition would then be inapplicable to them.

Their circumstances, therefore, include every thing which has any influence on their conduct, whether it be an excitement to obedience, or a temptation to disobedience; and yielding obedience in

the circumstances in which they are placed, would be yielding obedience while subjected to all the influences of every kind to which they are now subjected.

The proposition respects all mankind. It respects Adam when he committed the first and all his other transgressions; and it respects all his posterity, whether Jews, Heathens, or Christians, at the time of committing all their transgressions.

In support of the proposition, we allege, in the *first* place,

The nature of the divine law.

The divine law requires from mankind a course of conduct adapted to glorify the Most High in a perfect manner. This is seen, first, from the *Character* of the Most High. He possesses infinite perfection; and He not only has the attributes, which constitute infinite perfection, but they are of course exercised and displayed in all His works. All His works are consistent with, and expressive of His character. Now from His infinite perfection it is apparent, that His law requires a service adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner: for it would be inconsistent with that perfection to impose on mankind a

law requiring a service, that was not adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner. A law, requiring a service that is not adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner, requires a service that is adapted to dishonour Him to that extent to which it fails of glorifying Him perfectly. And it surely is not consistent with the perfection of God to impose a law, requiring a service that will dishonour him. No law can be worthy of Him, which does not require a service perfectly glorious to Him. To impose a law, requiring a service which dishonours Him, must arise from a want either of disposition, or capacity to impose a law, requiring a service that should be perfectly glorious to Him. But the want of a disposition to impose a law, demanding a service that should glorify Him perfectly, would be inconsistent with His infinite wisdom, which would lead Him to impose a law requiring a service adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner; and the want of capacity to impose such a law, would be inconsistent with His infinite understanding. If the nature of mankind is such, that a law might be devised demanding a service adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner, then not to be able to devise such a law

must arise from a want of understanding. If the nature of mankind is such, that infinite understanding cannot devise such a law, then God must have created them with such a nature, either from a want of capacity or disposition to create them with a nature such, that a law might be imposed requiring a service which would be adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner. If His creating them with such a nature, that no such law could be devised, arose from a want of capacity, it must be a want of understanding to contrive, or of power to create a nature, by which it would be possible to impose on them such a law. To be unable to contrive such a nature would be inconsistent with His infinite understanding; to be unable to create it, would be inconsistent with His infinite power. If His creating them with such a nature, that no such law can be devised by an infinite understanding, arose from a want of a disposition to create them with such a nature, the want of that disposition is inconsistent with His infinite wisdom; for it surely is inconsistent with infinite wisdom to create an order of beings whose nature would be such, that if they were disposed to glorify Him perfectly, they could not from such



a disposition pursue a course of conduct which should glorify Him perfectly.

Since then it would be thus inconsistent with the divine perfections to impose on mankind a law, requiring from them a service which would not glorify the Most High in a perfect manner, it is manifest from His perfections, that the service required by the law, which He has imposed on them, is adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner.

*Secondly.* This is apparent also from the consideration that the divine law requires of mankind all the service which God can of right require of them. For it requires them to love Him with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and mind. It requires them to yield Him the most intense love which their faculties enable them to exercise, and to yield it at all times, and express it in all their actions. And it requires them, whether they eat or drink, or whatever they do, to do all to His glory. It therefore demands of them all the service which God can of right demand of them: for He cannot, consistently with rectitude, demand of them a service greater than their faculties enable them to yield.

Now, from the fact that the divine law

thus requires of mankind all the service which God can of right demand of them, it is apparent that the service it requires of them, is adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner. For God surely has a right to require of them a service that is perfectly glorious to himself. If not, then He has no right to require of them a service which is not dishonourable to Himself; for a service that is not perfectly glorious to Him, as far as it fails of being perfectly glorious, is dishonourable to Him. But God surely is not destitute of a right of requiring of them a service which is not dishonourable to Himself; for it is inconsistent with His perfections to create an order of beings, of whom He shall not have the right of requiring a service that is not dishonourable to Himself.

And moreover, if God has no right to require of mankind any service but what is dishonourable to Himself, then mankind have the right or privilege of pursuing, with perfect innocence, a course of conduct which is dishonourable to Him. But mankind surely cannot, with innocence, pursue any such course of conduct, for they are bound to do whatever they do to His glory.

Since, then, God has the right of demanding of mankind a service which is perfectly glorious to Himself; and since, by His law, He has demanded all the service which He can of right require, it is manifest that the service required by His law, is adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner.

*Thirdly.* It is apparent, likewise, from the consideration that the divine law requires mankind to be actuated, in all their conduct, by perfect benevolence towards God. They are commanded to love Him with all their heart, and soul, and strength, and mind, and to do whatever they do to His glory. That is, they are required to exercise towards Him, at all times, the most intense benevolence which their faculties will enable them to exercise; to place all the value on His infinite interests, and cherish all the respect for His rights, and all the delight in His well-being, and to make all the efforts to promote His glory of which they are capable.

Now, from the fact that the divine law thus requires mankind, at all times, to exercise perfect benevolence towards God, and to pursue a course of conduct which shall be a proper expression of that be-

nevolence, it is obvious that the service it requires is adapted to glorify God in a perfect manner. For to be actuated towards God by perfect benevolence, is assuredly adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner. To place all the value on His interests, and cherish and express all the regard for His rights, and all the delight in His well-being, and to make all the efforts to promote His glory which are possible, is to conduct towards Him according to His character, and to regard Him as He ought to be regarded; and that must certainly be perfectly glorious to Him. Perfect benevolence towards Him can never do any thing which is not perfectly glorious to Him. Nothing but malevolence can violate His rights and dishonour Him. Perfect benevolence towards Him will pursue a course of conduct which is perfectly benevolent towards Him; but nothing can be perfectly benevolent towards Him, which is not perfectly glorious to Him. Perfect benevolence, therefore, will pursue a course of conduct which is perfectly glorious to Him.

Since, then, the divine law requires mankind to exercise perfect benevolence towards Him, at all times, it is plain that

the service it requires is adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner.

*Fourthly.* Is it not preposterous to suppose, that the service demanded by the divine law is not adapted to glorify the Most High in a perfect manner? and to suppose, that were mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield a perfect obedience to His law, would not be perfectly glorious to Him? That if they yielded Him the highest tribute of glory their endowments enabled them to yield, it would not be a perfect tribute? Is it not preposterous to suppose, that it would be a real injury to the Most High for them to do their duty? that it would cast a veil over the lustre of His attributes, and be prejudicial to the general good? We have never imagined, that holiness has or can do any mischief in the divine kingdom; but on the contrary, have regarded it as a perfect good; perfect, considered abstractly from its influence; and perfect in its influence on the interests of the universe. We have always conceived, that all the natural evil which exists, or can exist, must have its origin from sin. Can it be, that were all mankind to yield a perfect obedience to the divine law, it would rend away the robes

of glory which invest the Holy One of Israel, and quench the effulgence of His throne?

*Fifthly.* We add once more, that these views of the divine law are correct, is obvious from the fact, that that law consults the interests of *mankind* in a perfect manner. It is perfectly glorious to them. It secures their well-being in a perfect manner. The service it requires is such, that if yielded, it will exalt them to absolute perfection of character and absolute happiness. In rendering an entire obedience, they will ascend to a state of the highest glory and blessedness of which their nature is capable.

Now, from the fact that the divine law, if obeyed, is thus glorious to them, and consults their honour and happiness in a perfect manner, it is manifest, that the service it requires is adapted to be perfectly glorious to the Most High; that it secures His glory and blessedness in a perfect manner. For if not, if while that law makes a perfect provision for the good of mankind, it does not make a perfect provision for His good; then, in imposing it, He has consulted the good of mankind more than He has His own good. He has placed a higher value on their in-

terests than on His own ; He has made a better provision for their honour and happiness than for His. But it cannot be that the Most High, in imposing that law, exalted the finite interests of mankind above His infinite interests, and consulted their honour and happiness more than His own. It is inconsistent with His infinite perfections to act as though He were not an infinite Being, by placing a higher value on them than on Himself. It is inconsistent with His making His own glory the great end of all His works, to consult, in any instance, the good of His creatures more than His own glory.

From these several considerations then, it is apparent, that the law of God requires of mankind a service adapted to glorify Him in a perfect manner. And from that fact it is manifest, that if mankind yielded a perfect obedience to that law, that obedience would glorify Him in a perfect manner. *Therefore* it is manifest, that if mankind yielded a perfect obedience to that law, their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of His glory ; and that the same sum of glory would result to Him from the system of events which would then exist, as redounds to Him from

the system of events which now exists. For their disobedience neither is nor can be good materials for any thing more than a *perfect* display of His glory; and their obedience would be good materials for that. And the sum of glory which results to the Most High, from the system of events now existing, is only a *perfect* sum; and the sum which would redound to Him from the system of events which would exist, if they yielded that obedience, would also be a *perfect* sum.

In the *Second* place—

The Proposition is seen to be true, from the fact that God desires all mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield a perfect obedience to His law. He really and perfectly desires all mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, to yield Him a perfect obedience. He as really desires them all to yield Him, in the circumstances in which they exist, a perfect obedience in all those instances in which they disobey Him, as He does His children, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield Him such an obedience in all those cases in which they do yield it.

This is seen from the fact, that He has most clearly and strongly expressed such



a desire. Thus He has expressed that desire, by *requiring* them to yield Him a perfect obedience. His law is not a mere statement to them of what their duty is; but it is an authoritative requisition. He *commands* mankind to yield a perfect obedience to His law. But why does He solemnly *require* them to obey, if He has no desire that they should obey? Why ask that which He does not wish to receive?

He has expressed that desire, by employing a vast system of *means to induce* them to render a perfect obedience. Why does He enforce the requisition of His law by infinite sanctions, if He has no desire that all should yield such an obedience? Why does He urge them by the most persuasive reasonings, expostulations, and entreaties in His word? Why employ a succession of messengers to persuade them? Why adapt the dispensations of His providence to that end? Why send down His Holy Spirit to strive with them, by an influence adapted to excite them to obedience? Would He address to them, as moral agents, the mighty influence of this system of means, if He had no desire that they should yield to their influence, and obey His will; but on the contrary, desired that they should not render him a perfect obedience?

He has expressed that desire in explicit *declarations*. “As I live, saith the Lord God, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked, but that the wicked turn and live.” If God has *no* pleasure in the *death* of the wicked, He cannot have any pleasure in their sinning, which is the cause of their death. For He cannot desire their sinning for any other reason, than that it may furnish an occasion for that display of His attributes which is made in their death. But if His pleasure is, that they *turn* and live, then He desires them to yield Him a perfect obedience. And if His desire respecting all the wicked is, that *they* turn and live, then He does not desire any of them to continue to sin, that He may make that display of His attributes which would be involved in *His* turning them, that they may live. Why did Christ, weeping over Jerusalem, utter so pathetic a lamentation, if He had no desire that its inhabitants should yield a perfect obedience to the divine law? “If thou hadst known, even thou, at least in this thy day, the things which belong unto thy peace! but now they are hid from thine eyes.” And why did the Most High express a similar lamentation over the rebellious antedeluvians and the Israelites?

And why did the Holy Spirit declare by Paul, "that God will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth?"

In regard to those measures of His administration, God has certainly acted precisely as though He had the most earnest desire that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience; and has therefore virtually *declared* by those measures, that such is His desire; and the passages of Scripture quoted and referred to, are explicit declarations to that effect.

God has then, in the most clear and strong manner, *expressed* a desire that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience.

Now, from his having *expressed* that desire, it is manifest that He really *possesses* it. For if He does not really and perfectly desire them to yield Him such an obedience, He cannot be sincere in *expressing* such a desire. But God cannot be insincere in making that expression of a desire, that they should yield Him such an obedience. Need we adduce reasons proving it?

*First.* That such insincerity is not consistent with His infinite perfections. It is inconsistent with His veracity to declare,

that He really and perfectly desires a thing to exist, when he does not desire it to exist, but really and perfectly desires that it should not exist. But in commanding mankind to yield Him such an obedience, in employing such a system of means to excite them to yield it, and in expressing such a displeasure with them for not yielding it, He has *acted* certainly as though He really and perfectly desired them to render such an obedience; and has therefore virtually *declared*, that He does really desire them to render it; and He has also made the same declaration in explicit language. In making such a declaration, therefore, if He does not really desire it, He has made a declaration which does not mean what it says.

And by those measures of His administration and declarations in his word, he has led mankind to *regard* Him as *declaring*, that He really *desired* them to yield Him a perfect obedience. When He imposed His law on our first parents, they undoubtedly interpreted Him as declaring, that He had such a desire. So did the Israelites at Mount Sinai; for they entered into a solemn covenant with Him, promising to do all which He commanded them. And such unquestionably have

been the views of all in every age who have received the messages of Prophets, of the Messiah, and of Apostles, as messages from God. And such are the views of all who now receive the sacred volume as a revelation of the divine will. How could the children of God yield obedience to His law in any instance whatever, if they did not feel the most absolute assurance that He really and perfectly desires them to yield Him a perfect obedience? How could they sorrow with a godly sorrow, that they do not render such an obedience? How could they employ means to induce all mankind to render Him such an obedience? How could they express to Him in prayer the desire that all mankind should, if they did not feel the same assurance, that He desires them all to yield Him a perfect obedience? They act most inconsistently in these respects, if they do not feel the most absolute assurance, that God really desires all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience. But that they are led by the measures of His administration and declarations of His word to feel such an assurance, there can be no doubt; nor can there be any, but that assurance is perfectly authoriz-

ed by those measures and declarations. For if it is natural and rational to interpret Him as *declaring* by those measures of His administration and declarations of His word, that He has such a desire, then those measures and declarations in fact devolve on mankind an *obligation* to regard Him as possessing that desire; for mankind are under obligation to regard Him as possessing the desire in regard to them, which he really expresses in His conduct.

As then God has devolved on them an obligation to regard Him as really desiring that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience; if He does not desire it, He has totally deceived them: He has devolved on them an obligation to believe what is not true, and to entertain views of Him which are entirely erroneous. But that is inconsistent with His veracity and all His other moral perfections.

And moreover in these measures of His administration, He has acted in respect to a perfect obedience from all mankind, as though He placed on it all the value which He would if He really desired them to yield Him such an obedience; and therefore has *virtually declared* by

those measures that He does place on it all the value which He would if He perfectly desired it. And He has made the same declaration in those passages referred to of His word. If then He does not really desire it, He has declared that He places on it a value above that, which He really does place on it; and has, therefore, made a declaration which is not true.

*Secondly.* It is apparent that God is perfectly sincere in expressing that desire, that mankind should render a perfect obedience to His law, from the fact that He requires them to yield Him such an obedience, for precisely the reason for which He would desire and require them to yield it if He had such a desire.

Thus the reason which he assigns for requiring them to render Him a perfect obedience is, that He is God, their creator, preserver, and benefactor, and has thence the right of establishing over them a government; and that His government is holy, just, and good; the service which it requires being a service of which He is supremely worthy, and which they are able and under obligation to yield.

And the fact, that the service He requires is precisely the service which He

is worthy to receive; and precisely that which they are bound to render; is the reason precisely which, if He really desired them to render that service, would constitute the proper ground of His desiring it, and the proper ground to be assigned for His requiring it. And from the fact that the reason He assigns for requiring it is the reason for which, if He really desired them to yield that obedience, He would desire it, and the reason which He would assign for requiring it, it is apparent that He does really and perfectly desire them to yield that obedience. For if He does not really desire that obedience, why does He act as though He desired it by assigning that reason for requiring it? And why does He thereby entirely deceive mankind in regard to His desire? It is entirely natural and rational for them to infer from His assigning that reason, that He really desires their obedience; and the obligation therefore rests on them to regard Him as really desiring it. If then He does not desire it, He has devolved on them an obligation to believe what is not true, and to entertain an erroneous view respecting Him. But He surely cannot have imposed on them such an obligation.



*Thirdly.* We are bound to draw the conclusion, that He is perfectly sincere in expressing that desire, from the mode in which He has expressed it. For the mode in which He has expressed it bears every mark of perfect sincerity, and is eminently adapted to make on mankind a deep impression that He is perfectly sincere.

Thus He has expressed the desire in the most *clear* manner. His law is not a simple declaration that the course which it delineates is the course which it would be well for mankind, as rational beings, to pursue, without any *command*, that they should pursue it, and leaving them in uncertainty whether or not it is His *will* that they should pursue it; but it is an authoritative requisition, an explicit demand of them of the service it prescribes; and no one ever hesitated at all whether it is an expression of His *will*; or only mere advice, or a mere statement of what it would be well for them to do, without any expression of His *will* in regard to it.

He has expressed the desire in a *manner peculiarly solemn and impressive*. Thus He seems to have revealed Himself to our first parents, and to some of the patriarchs and prophets, in a visible form, and

audibly addressed to them His law. And on Mount Sinai He manifested himself to the whole nation of Israel, by the most awful displays of power and majesty, and proclaimed to them His law by His own almighty voice. He has inspired a multitude of prophets and apostles to be the messengers of His will. He sent down His Son to announce the glad tidings of the Gospel. He has wrought innumerable miracles to convince mankind that the prophets, that Christ, and the apostles, were His messengers, and to excite attention and respect to their messages. He has committed all His requisitions to writing, that they may be transmitted to every generation, and known to every individual; and He has employed, in every age, an order of men to teach and enforce them, and consecrated one day in seven to be at least partly employed in that work.

He has also strongly expressed that desire, by *enforcing* all His requisitions by the most weighty motives, the rewards of heaven and hell; and employing a variety of powerful instruments to give influence to those motives, as the most alluring invitations, the most cogent reasonings, expostulations, warnings, rebukes,

and the smiles and frowns of His providence.

He has strongly expressed it by *incurring*, if the language may be used, a *vast expense* in expressing it. How many miracles has He wrought! How many prophets and apostles has He inspired! How many other messengers has He employed! What an act was it to employ His Son as a messenger of His truth and grace! How many other stupendous acts of condescension, power, wisdom, and grace, has this work involved! At what infinite pains, in these various respects, has He been to express the desire!

He has expressed that desire very strongly also, by the *frequency* of His urging on mankind the requisitions of His law.

Thus, in all respects, the mode in which He has expressed the desire, that mankind should yield a perfect obedience to His law, bears every mark of perfect sincerity; and is eminently adapted to make on mankind the impression that He does, with perfect sincerity, desire them to render Him such an obedience.

If He were perfectly desirous that they should render Him that obedience, He could not have displayed more earnest-

ness in requiring and urging them to yield it, than He actually has. As then He has, in this respect, acted precisely as though He was perfectly sincere, we are bound to regard Him as perfectly sincere. In these considerations then, we have so many proofs that God is perfectly sincere in expressing a desire, that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience. And if He has sincerely expressed such a desire, then He of course has a real and perfect desire that they should yield Him such an obedience.

*Again.* It is obvious that God really and perfectly desires all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience, from the fact, that His law is an expression of His *will* respecting their conduct. Our Lord, in the form of prayer which He taught His disciples, and in many other passages, designates the divine law as the *will* of God.

Now if the divine law is an expression of the *will* of God respecting the conduct of mankind, then it is clear that He desires them to yield it a perfect obedience; for the will of a being is His choice. No being can will a thing which he does not choose; and no being can choose a thing, unless for some reason or other he desires

it. If the law of God then expresses His *will* respecting the conduct of mankind, it expresses His choice, and therefore His desire, in regard to their conduct. If in that law He expresses a will, that all mankind should perform all the service which it requires, then He expresses a desire that they should perform all that service. If it is His will that they should yield it a perfect obedience, it is His desire that they should. Can we conceive of His having a will that they should yield that obedience, without having a desire that they should?

Let the reader revolve this argument. He will find there is no method of escape from its conclusion, unless it be either by denying that the law of God is His *will*, (in which case he will contradict the Son of God,) or by denying that what God wills He desires, (in which case He will contradict the plainest dictates of consciousness and reason.) If a being desires what He wills, then it is as really and perfectly the desire as it is the will of the Most High, that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience. It is as really and perfectly His desire, that all mankind should yield Him a perfect obedience in all those instances in which they

disobey Him, as it is that His children should yield Him a perfect obedience in those instances in which they do yield Him such an obedience.

We are aware, that the advocates of the sentiment we are opposing will object to the whole of this argumentation; that we have disregarded in it a distinction which they and many others make, and hold as exceedingly important, between God's desiring a thing, in itself considered, and desiring it, all things considered. We have indeed disregarded that distinction, and for reasons which, we hope, will induce our readers henceforth to disregard and banish it for ever from their reasonings on theological subjects.

*First.* It is a distinction without a difference. There is no difference between a thing, in itself considered, and all things considered.

A thing, in itself considered, is the whole of that thing. It is that thing contemplated in respect to all which pertains to it, and constitutes its nature. And a thing, all things considered, is also the whole of that thing. It is that thing contemplated in all its relations to other things; exerting all the influence it does and will exert, and is capable of exerting,

on all other things ; and receiving all the influence of which it is and will be, and is capable of being, the subject from all other things.

Now we affirm, that there is no difference between contemplating a thing in respect to all which pertains to it, and constitutes its nature, and contemplating it in respect to all its relations to all other things, and in respect to all the influence which it exerts, and is capable of exerting, and of which it is and is capable of being the subject. For it is its *nature* which constitutes its relations to all other things: and we cannot contemplate the whole of its nature, without contemplating all its relations of which that nature is the ground, or contemplating its nature as sustaining those relations ; nor can we contemplate the whole of its relations, without contemplating the whole of its nature, which is the ground of those relations. We cannot contemplate the whole of its nature, without contemplating the whole of the influence which it exerts, and is capable of exerting, by its nature : and the whole of the influence of which, in consequence of its nature, it is and is capable of being the subject. Nor can we contemplate the whole of the influence

which it exerts, and is capable of exerting, and of which it is and is capable of being the subject, without contemplating the whole of its nature by which it exerts, and is capable of exerting, and is the subject, and is capable of being the subject, of that influence.

Thus, in respect to the case in question, there is no difference whatever between God's desiring all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience, in itself considered, and His desiring them to yield Him such an obedience, all things considered. For in desiring it, in itself considered, He would desire it as being precisely such a thing as it would be; as having precisely such a nature as it would have, that is, as being precisely such a service as He requires of them, and is worthy to receive from them, and they are under obligations to render to Him; and as capable of exerting precisely all the influence which it would be capable of exerting; and of being employed to produce all the effects which it might be employed to produce; and in desiring it, all things considered, He would desire it in precisely the same manner. For He would then desire it as being precisely such a thing as it would be; as having



precisely the nature which it would have ; and as thence capable of being employed to produce all the effects which it might be employed to produce. We challenge all the advocates of the supposed distinction in question, to point out a shadow of difference between God's desiring from all mankind a perfect obedience, in itself considered, and His desiring it, all things considered.

The advocates of this supposed distinction, without, it would seem, being aware of it, use the *phrase* " a thing in itself considered," to denote only a *part* of a thing, or a thing considered in respect to only a part of its nature ; and employ the other phrase to denote the *whole* of a thing, or a thing considered in respect to the whole of its nature ; and have imposed on themselves in that way. This is apparent from the whole of their reasonings and illustrations respecting it.

They endeavour, for instance, to illustrate and prove the distinction in the following manner :—A sick man learns that a certain medicine will restore him to health ; but, that being odious to the taste, and painful in its operation, it will, in curing him, subject him to a given quantity of pain. Now, contemplating it, in

itself considered, as odious to the taste, and painful in its operation, he does not desire it; but contemplating it, all things considered, as being, besides the cause of such a quantity of pain, a certain remedy for his disease, he does desire it.

Now it is plain, in this case, that the man, in contemplating the medicine simply as the cause of so much suffering, contemplates only a part of its nature; namely, only that part, which is the cause of that suffering; and it is not till he contemplates it as the cause of health, as well as of that suffering, that he contemplates its whole nature. To desire a thing therefore, in itself considered, according to their use of the language, is only to desire a part of that thing, namely, that part of it by which it produces part of the effects which it produces: and to desire a thing, all things considered, is to desire the whole of that thing; that is, to desire it, considering its whole nature, by which it produces all its effects. And there is undoubtedly a vast difference between a part of a thing and the whole of it, and between desiring a part of a thing and desiring the whole of it: but it is supremely preposterous to talk of God's desiring *a thing*, in itself considered; mean-

ing, by "itself considered," only a *part* of that thing; since the *thing*, that is, the whole of it, is very different from that part of it which is denoted by "in itself considered;" and desiring only that part, is not desiring the thing as a whole. If we can say, He desires a *thing*, by desiring only a given part of it, we may also say, He desires that thing by not desiring the other part of it; and if we can say either, we may say, that any part of a thing is the whole of that thing.

Since then there is no difference between desiring a thing, in itself considered, and desiring it, all things considered, it is to the last degree contradictory to hold, that God desires from all mankind a perfect obedience, in itself considered, but does not desire it, all things considered; for desiring it, in itself considered, is desiring it, all things considered. If God desires from all mankind a perfect obedience, in itself considered, He desires the whole of that obedience. He desires it as precisely such a thing as it is, as having precisely the nature which it has, and as capable from that nature of being employed to produce all the effects which it is capable of being employed to produce. And to hold, that

while he thus desires it, in itself considered, He does not desire it, all things considered, is to hold, that he does not desire the *whole* of that obedience, and as having precisely such a nature as it has, and as capable from that nature of precisely that of which it is capable; that is, it is to deny that he desires it, in itself considered. If He desires from all mankind a perfect obedience at all, He desires it as such a thing as it is, taking into view all which pertains to it, and constitutes its nature; for it is being such a thing as it is, and having its nature consist of precisely all that of which it does consist, that constitutes it a perfect obedience.

*Secondly.* Another reason for which we disregarded that supposed distinction is, that even if it were admitted, that it exists in regard to other things, yet it is demonstrable that it has no existence in respect to the subject under consideration. God not only desires from all mankind a perfect obedience, in itself considered, but He also desires it, all things considered. This is apparent from the fact, that He *requires* them to yield Him that obedience, *all things considered*.

What things are to be considered in requiring of all mankind a perfect obedience, in order that that obedience may

be required, *all things* considered? What, besides Jehovah, but mankind, their obedience and disobedience, and the consequences of their yielding and not yielding a perfect obedience? But God considered all these things in requiring of mankind a perfect obedience. He considered himself perfectly. In requiring that obedience, He contemplated himself as precisely such a being as He is; as having the character which He possesses, the rights in respect to mankind and all other beings, which He has; and the capacity of employing the obedience and disobedience of mankind to promote His glory, which He has; and as having precisely the end in view, in all His agency, which He has. He considered mankind also perfectly. He contemplated them as exactly such beings as they are; as having just the capacity which they actually possess; sustaining toward Him and all other beings all the relations they do sustain; existing in exactly the circumstances in which they do exist, and as under all the obligations which actually rest on them.

He likewise considered their obedience and disobedience, and the consequences of their obedience and disobedience per-

fectly. He contemplated the precise nature of their obedience and disobedience, and all the effects which He could and should employ them to produce. This is seen from the fact, that He promised a reward to obedience, which is an appropriate reward of it throughout eternity; and threatened a punishment to disobedience, which is an appropriate punishment of it throughout eternity. And in thus considering Himself, all mankind, and the nature and the consequences of their obedience and disobedience, He considered all things.

That He must thus have considered all things, is manifest from the consideration, that it would have been inconsistent with His infinite perfection to have imposed on mankind a law, without considering all things with which it had any connexion; since without such a consideration of all things, He could not have had the assurance the law was a wise one.— Since then, all things considered, He *required* of all mankind a perfect obedience, it is plain that, all things considered, He *desired* all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience; for the requisition of that obedience is, the expression of His *will*. And since, as before shown, it is His *will*,

all things considered, that all mankind should yield that obedience, it is His *desire*, all things considered, that they should; because whatever it is His will mankind should do, it is His desire they should do.

And moreover having, by requiring that obedience, all things considered, acted precisely as though He desired it, all things considered, He has virtually declared that he does desire it, all things considered. He must therefore so desire it, for otherwise He must have made a declaration that is not true, which He cannot have done. If He had only *desired* it, in itself considered, and not all things considered, supposing the distinction to exist, which that language is employed to denote, He would only have *required* it, in itself considered; and thereby declared, that He desired it only in itself considered; since if he only desired it, in itself considered, no possible reason could exist for His requiring it in any other respect than in itself considered. For why should He require more than He desires? We challenge all the advocates of this fancied distinction to furnish us a single reason, proving that it is possible that God could require from all mankind a

perfect obedience, all things considered, for any other reason, than that he desired it, all things considered.

And furthermore, in requiring it, all things considered, He has virtually declared, that it is its being such a thing as it is, all things considered, that is the *reason* of His requiring it; and has therefore declared, that it is its being such a thing as it is, all things considered, that is the reason that he desires it. If then, he does not desire it, all things considered, He has made a declaration that is not true, which he cannot have done. If God in requiring it looked at it in all respects, who has authority to say, that in desiring it, He did not also look at it in all respects?

Whether then, any such distinction as that in question exists, or not, it is certain that God, all things considered, *desires* all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience.

We are also aware, that to these views the objection will be made by those whom we oppose, that if God as really and perfectly desired all mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield Him a perfect obedience, as He does His children, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield Him obedience in all



the instances in which they obey Him, then, since that which He really and perfectly desires should take place, does not take place, He must be unhappy.

To this objection we reply,—*First*, That God is not *disappointed* at all by the disobedience of mankind, and is not therefore made unhappy by that means. For though He *desires* them to yield Him a perfect obedience, yet He does not *expect* that they will. He knows perfectly that in the circumstances in which they are placed, they will not yield Him obedience, but will disobey; and is therefore no more disappointed by their disobedience than He would be if He had no desire that they should obey.

*Secondly*. The objection may be made with as much propriety to the view of God's desire entertained by the objectors, as to the view which we have exhibited. For if, as they hold, God really and perfectly desires all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience, in itself considered; then it must be as true, that because that which, in itself considered, He really and perfectly desires should take place, does not, in itself considered, take place, He is made unhappy by it; as it can be that because that which, all things

considered, He really and perfectly desires should take place, does not, all things considered, take place, He must be made unhappy by its not taking place. Let the objectors then remove the objection from their own views before they urge it against ours.

*Thirdly.* But the objection has no force against either of those views. It no more follows that God is unhappy because mankind do not render Him the perfect obedience He desires them to render, than it follows from the fact that He loves holiness really and perfectly, that therefore He is unhappy because it does not exist in every instance in which it might, and from the fact, that He hates sin really and perfectly, that He is unhappy because it exists as it does.

*Again.* Those whom we oppose will probably ask by way of objection to the views we have presented, why, if God thus really and perfectly desires all mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience, does He not *make* them yield such an obedience? And remark, that He is able to make them yield a perfect obedience; and if He desired they should, it is to be presumed He would cause them to render it.

To this we reply, that our proposition is, that God desires mankind *in the circumstances in which they are now placed*, to yield Him a perfect obedience; that is, in circumstances in which He employs only that specific quantity of means to induce them to yield such an obedience which He does employ, and which obedience is attended with all the difficulties with which it is attended. Our proposition does not affirm that He desires them to yield Him a perfect obedience, without any consideration whether or not He must place them in different circumstances from those in which they now exist, in order to lead them to yield that obedience; that is, whether or not He must use a much greater quantity of means than He now employs to induce them to yield that obedience. He cannot use any more means than He now employs to induce them to yield a perfect obedience, without placing them in different circumstances from those in which they now exist. And since, if they are not disposed to yield Him obedience under the influence of that quantity of means He now employs, He cannot lead them to yield Him obedience without employing a larger quantity of means: He can-

not lead them to yield Him obedience without placing them in new circumstances. The reason, therefore, that God, although He desires them to yield Him a perfect obedience in the circumstances in which they exist, does not actually lead them to render a perfect obedience, is that He cannot lead them to yield a perfect obedience, without placing them in different circumstances. The obedience which He desires is an obedience in the circumstances in which they now exist; an obedience therefore, rendered in any other circumstances, were He supposed to lead them to render it, would not be the obedience which He desires.

The proposition then is, we trust, established, that God desires all mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, to yield Him a perfect obedience. And the truth of that proposition involves the truth of the general proposition we have alleged it to sustain; that if mankind were in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield a perfect obedience to the divine law, that obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory; and that the same sum of glory would result to the Most High from the system

of events which would then exist, as redounds to Him from the system of events which now exists; since He could not really and perfectly desire them to yield that obedience unless it would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of His glory; and unless the same sum of glory would redound to Him from the system of events which would then exist, as results to Him from the system of events which now exists. For a perfect display of His glory, is the object of His supreme desire, and the end pursued by Him supremely in all His agency; and, therefore, as, if their obedience would not be as good materials as their disobedience is for a perfect display of His glory, their yielding that obedience would be inconsistent with a perfect display of His glory, He could not desire them to yield it. But since a perfect display of His glory is the object of His supreme desire; and since, at the same time, He really and perfectly desires all mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield Him a perfect obedience, it is certain that it would be entirely consistent with a perfect display of His glory for them to yield that obedience: and, therefore, it is certain that

were they to yield that obedience, it would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of His glory; and that thence the same sum of glory would result to Him from the system of events which would then exist, as redounds to Him from the system of events which now exists.

In the third place—

The proposition derives support from the consideration that a perfect obedience from mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, would be peculiarly glorious to God.

The greater the difficulties are which are overcome in rendering an obedience, the more glorious will that obedience be to God; for the greater the difficulties are which are overcome in rendering an obedience, the stronger is the expression of love to God, which is made in that obedience. A being who performs an act of obedience against the influence of powerful temptation, makes a much stronger expression of love to God in that act, than is made in performing an act of obedience when entirely exempt from temptation, or under the influence of only a light temptation. And a being who

performs a long series of acts of obedience against the influence of powerful temptation, makes a much stronger expression of his love and devotedness, than would be made by the same number of acts, when entirely free from temptation, or when subjected to only a small influence from it. Thus Abram, in offering up Isaac, gave a much stronger proof of his confidence in God than he would have made in an act of obedience to any requisition which was not like that, apparently inconsistent with a divine promise; and Job displayed submission to the divine will much more strongly in enduring with patience the severe afflictions with which he was visited, than he could have done during the season of his prosperity. When a being, assailed by the violence of temptation, struggles through the storm with a heart unyielding in its attachment to God, with a holy fearfulness spurning all the alluring joys of sin, cleaving to God as the only object worthy of his love, and preferring His service, amid all the buffetings of trial, to the promised pleasures of rebellion, all his holy affections rise to a more vigorous and lofty exercise than when he is in a state of inferior temptation, or of entire

freedom from it. They show more indubitably the reality and strength of his devotion to God; and form a much more visible and striking expression of it. His obedience in those circumstances, therefore, is much more glorious to God. It is a much more strong and impressive testimony to His worthiness of a perfect obedience from His creatures. It proclaims much more loudly how infinitely lovely He is above all things else; and how sacred are all His rights, and how just and holy are all His commands; and how unspeakably the pleasures of His service surpass all others; and how rich a privilege it is to servè Him even when amid the most trying scenes those pleasures are the least. And it is of much more worth to other beings as an example, adapted to inspire those who are assailed with similar temptations with equal resolution, to encourage their hopes and prompt them to suppress the thought of turning from the service of God; and fitted to quicken those who are exempted from trial in their attachment to the Most High, and exciting them to greater zeal in expressing their love.

Thus an act of obedience is glorious to God in proportion to the degree of love



to Him which is exercised in it; and the degree of love involved in an act of obedience, is proportioned to the difficulties which oppose the exercise of that act.

From these considerations it is apparent that a perfect obedience from all mankind in the circumstances in which they are placed, would be peculiarly glorious to God. For it would be performed against the opposing influence of powerful temptation, and therefore involve an exalted exercise and expression of love to Him. How glorious to the Most High would it, for example, have been, had our first parents, when assailed by all the tempting influence from their own senses, and the subtle and powerful adversary, to which they were subjected, risen in all their native purity superior to those temptations, and maintained an unbroken and an invincible attachment to God? What a tribute of glory would have been presented to Him by an obedience, performed as that would have been, while the voice by which He spake them into being had scarcely died away in the vales of Eden; and declaring, as that would have declared, that though emerged but a moment, as it were, from the abyss of non-existence, the visions of His presence they

had beheld, had chained to Him for ever all the energies of their affection; that they had seen so much of His infinite excellence, that all things else had no power to attract their love; that they had been touched with such reverence of His majesty, that nothing could tempt them to forget His rights, or disrespect His will; that they had been so ravished with the joys of His presence and service, that all other joys were unable to allure their hearts, or turn away their eye from His glory?

And with what emotions of admiration and joy would they have been beheld by the habitants of other worlds? How, while their eye watched the new created pair, buffeting their way through the tempestuous scenes of their trial, resisting, with the shield of faith, all the fiery darts of their mighty tempter, and turning away, with a holy self-denial, from all the attractions of the forbidden tree, would the universe of holy beings have felt a more ardent flame of love to the Most High, kindling their own hearts, and a more profound reverence of His will, and a deeper sense of the guilt of rebellion against Him, and firmer purposes of eternal fidelity taking possession of their minds?

And how glorious to the Most High had it been, had all the descendants of the first pair, amid all the scenes of their trial, yielded Him a perfect obedience! How glorious, had they never listened to the solicitations of the adversary, nor indulged the calls of inordinate passion, nor stooped to forbidden joys; had they never swerved from the service of God, but, amid all the opposing influences which have been exerted on them, given their whole heart to Him, chosen Him as their only portion, and proved that no storms of temptation could quench the ardour of their love, nor shake their purpose of constant obedience to His will! How glorious to Him would it have been, if all the heathens whom He has given to behold only faint visions of His excellence, and to hear the sound only of His distant footstep, had still been wholly attached to Him, and rendered Him the full oblation of their hearts! How glorious to Him would it have been, had the Israelites, to whom He more clearly revealed His perfections, and proclaimed His will, ever rendered Him the high homage of love and faith which He required! How glorious to Him, when the Saviour, having finished His mighty work, published the call of

mercy, had all the tribes of men rendered Him thenceforth the tribute of a joyous and undeviating obedience!

How glorious to Him would it be, should all the millions who are now descending the ways of death, turn at His call, and surrender themselves to His will and service! And how happy an influence would it spread over other worlds!

Thus a perfect obedience from all mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, would be peculiarly glorious to God; and in that fact we are presented with ground for the inference, that did they yield that obedience, it would be as good materials as their disobedience is for a perfect display of His glory; and that the same sum of glory would redound to Him from the system of events which would then exist, as results to Him from the system of events which now exists.

In the fourth place—

The proposition is corroborated by the consideration, that did mankind yield a perfect obedience to the divine law, none of the misery to which they are now subjected in punishment of their rebellion would exist. The sum of glory which results to God from the system of events

that now exists, depends on the sum of happiness arising from it; and the sum of glory which would redound to Him from the system of events that would then exist, would depend also on the sum of happiness which should result from it. God is glorified by doing good, and happiness only is an absolute good; other things are good only as means of happiness. God, therefore, is glorified by giving existence to happiness; and the sum of glory resulting to Him from a system of events, must depend on the sum of happiness arising from that system; and He will be glorified by one system of events as much as by any other, if the sum of happiness arising from it will be the same. Such at least are our views. If, as others hold, the sum of glory redounding to God from a system of events, does not depend on the sum of happiness solely, but on the sum of moral excellence and happiness jointly which that system involves, the principle on which we should reason, were that our view of the subject, and the conclusion to which we should advance, would be the same as now.

We are presented then, by these considerations, with ground for the inference, that did mankind render a perfect obedi-

ence to the law of God, as great a sum of happiness would result from the system of events which would then exist, as results from the present system.

To ascertain the net sum, if we may use the language, of happiness under the present system, we must subtract from the whole sum of happiness existing under it, all the *misery* which it includes : and how vastly does that reduce the net amount of happiness below the whole sum of happiness ! For how immense is the sum of misery in the present system ! How numberless the beings who suffer—how great their capacity—how deep their miseries ! Count up the woes of which our world is now the scene—unfold the doors of hell, and sum up the miseries of that world !—Turn the eye back through every hour since the fall—look down through the scenes of eternity—and add up the awful sum of suffering which results, and will result, from sin. Subtract, then, an equal sum of happiness from the whole which exists, and how diminished, comparatively, is the balance !

And, to ascertain the sum of happiness which would exist were mankind obedient to God, we must conceive of them as exempted from all the misery to which

they are subjected under the present system, and as crowned with all the happiness which would be the reward of obedience. The results of these two systems of events must be viewed also in respect to their influence on all other created beings.

And who, contemplating them thus, does not find the impression stealing over him, that did mankind yield the Most High a perfect obedience, the sum of happiness resulting from it must be as great as that which now exists? Pluck away from mankind, by the hand of perfect obedience, those chains of misery which oppress our world—extinguish those fires of hell—annihilate that deathless worm—arrest those agonies of despair—exchange all the sufferings of eternal death for life and happiness everlasting,—and who shall grieve that misery has *increased*, or who shall imagine that the sum of happiness must be less than now exists? These views apply equally to any portion of mankind who should yield a complete obedience to the divine law.

These views then corroborate our proposition. For if, under the system of events which would exist were mankind entirely obedient, the sum of happi-

ness would be as great as under the present system of events; then as great a sum of glory would redound to the Most High from that system of events as results from this.

In the fifth place—

The proposition is corroborated by the consideration, that no greater good will result to the universe from those sins of mankind for which they will be punished, than would have resulted from a perfect obedience, rendered in the circumstances in which those sins are committed.

This is demonstrable from the justice of God. The good which will result from those sins will arise entirely from their punishment, by the manifestation thereby made of the evil of sin, and the divine abhorrence of it. And that good will result to God and to His holy subjects, by the vindication of His rights, and the display of His attributes, involved in the infliction of that punishment.

The sum of evil which will be inflicted in punishment of those sins will correspond to the sum of their guilt; and the sum of their guilt will depend on the sum of evil to the universe which they are naturally adapted to occasion, and which



would arise from them were they never visited with punishment.

Were they left unpunished, they would be to the universe the occasion of natural evil, consisting in a diminution of happiness, or in positive misery, or in both.— Sin consists in the exercise of selfishness; in preferring private or individual happiness above the happiness of the universe; and pursuing a course of conduct, to gain that private happiness, inconsistent with the happiness of the whole. It is adapted, therefore, to produce natural evil. It might also prove the occasion of moral evil. The degree of its wickedness depends on the degree of its inconsistency with the good of the whole; or on the quantity of natural and moral evil it is adapted to produce.

As then the guilt of those sins will correspond to the sum of injury they are naturally adapted to occasion to the universe, and which would result from them were they left unpunished; and as the sum of evil which will be inflicted in punishment of them will correspond to their guilt, it is apparent that the sum of evil which will be inflicted in punishment of them, will be precisely such, and only such, as shall prevent every injury to the universe which would result from them

were they left unpunished. For it is manifest, from the justice of the Most High, that He will not punish mankind beyond their desert of punishment on account of those sins: and as their desert of punishment corresponds to the injury to the universe, which would result from those sins if left unpunished to exert their natural influence, it is manifest that He will not inflict any punishment beyond what is necessary to prevent that injury. He cannot, in the exercise of justice, inflict any greater punishment than that, unless He can, consistently with justice, punish mankind beyond their guilt; or unless the guilt of their sins exceeds the injury they are adapted to occasion. But He cannot justly punish mankind beyond their guilt. For that would involve the right of punishing them for something besides their guilt, as for holiness, or something independent of their moral conduct, or for nothing at all. But it cannot be consistent with justice to punish them for what does not involve any guilt. It would be unjust to inflict evil which is not merited. Nor does the guilt of sin exceed the injury it is adapted to occasion to the universe. To affirm that it does, is to charge with guilt that which is granted to be harmless, which is ab-

surd. And were such a species of harmless guilt admitted to exist, it would not be consistent with the justice of God to punish it, for it is inconsistent with justice to punish what is harmless. If sin were not a violation of the rights, and consequently, if left to produce its natural effects, inconsistent with the happiness of the universe, it cannot be possible that it should involve any guilt. And therefore the sins of mankind do not involve any guilt beyond the injury which they are adapted to occasion to the universe. As then the guilt of sin consists entirely in its injuriousness to the universe, and God cannot, consistently with justice, punish it beyond its guilt, it is apparent that He will not punish mankind on account of their sins, beyond what is required to prevent their sins doing any injury to Him and His kingdom. To punish them more than that, would be to punish them beyond their injuriousness, and therefore beyond their guilt.

The design of God in punishing mankind is, by an exhibition of the evil of their sins, and His hatred of them, to prevent the injury to the universe which would result from them were they permitted to go unpunished. The evil of their

sins, and thence God's hatred of them, correspond to the injury they are adapted to occasion. He cannot, therefore, consistently with justice, punish mankind to any greater extent, than to prevent their sins doing Him and His kingdom any injury. For to punish them beyond that, would be to exhibit those sins as more evil than they actually are, and to express a greater degree of hatred of them than they actually deserve.

And as it is inconsistent with the justice of God, so it is with the good of the universe, for Him to inflict upon mankind any more punishment than is necessary to prevent the injury which their sins are adapted to occasion. He can have no pleasure in the punishment of sin, on any other ground than its promoting the good of the universe; and but for that effect, would never punish it. But it cannot promote the good of the universe to punish men to a greater degree than would correspond with the evil which their sins were adapted to produce; nor to express a greater abhorrence of their guilt than it merits, for that would be unjust in God, and therefore inconsistent with His glory and the good of His kingdom.

God will therefore inflict on mankind only so much punishment as shall prevent

their sins occasioning any injury to the universe. The universe will only be placed, by that punishment, in as favourable circumstances as those in which it would have been had mankind never committed the sins for which the punishment will be inflicted. And, as all the good which will result to the universe from the existence of those sins will arise from their punishment; and as only the same sum of good will result from their punishment which would have existed had they never been committed; it is apparent that the sum of good which will arise from the existence of those sins, will not exceed, but will exactly equal, the sum which would have existed had mankind yielded a perfect obedience in the circumstances in which those sins are committed. And this fact corroborates the position, that no greater good will result from *any* of the sins of mankind, than would have existed had they yielded a perfect obedience instead of committing those sins. If any greater good will result from the existence of any of their sins, it must result from those which shall be forgiven. But whence can it be proved, or rendered probable, that they are better materials for a display of the divine glory, than a per-

fect obedience rendered in their place would have been?

Whence can it be shown, that the exercise of His grace in pardoning them, will be more glorious to God than the exercise of His justice in punishing the others? There is no ground from which to infer the conclusion, that those sins which shall be forgiven, constitute better materials for manifesting the divine glory, than those which shall be punished; and in the fact, therefore, that those which are to be punished, are no better materials for the display of the divine glory, than a perfect obedience, rendered in their place, would have been, we are furnished with at least probable ground for the inference, that those also which are to be forgiven are no better materials for the same end, than a perfect obedience in their place would have been.

In the sixth place—

The proposition is demonstrated to be true by the fact, that unless it be true, no godly sorrow can be exercised for sin.

If it be not true, that were mankind to yield in the circumstances in which they exist, a perfect obedience to the divine law, their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is,

for a perfect display of the divine glory; and if thence it be not true, that the same sum of glory would redound to God from the system of events which would then exist, as results to Him from the system which now exists; then it follows, that all their sin must be necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity. A necessity must arise from its nature of admitting it to precisely such an extent into a system that shall secure a perfect display of His glory. The substitution of holiness in its place would injure the system, and prevent a perfect display of His glory. And it would therefore be a real and an unspeakable disadvantage to the Most High and to the universe, were mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience: for if it be the nature of sin, and not the mere fact, that mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, choose to exercise it instead of holiness, that makes it necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory; then it is necessary to the divine glory by a natural necessity, a necessity which it is impossible to obviate. And if mankind, by yielding a perfect obedience to the divine law, would prevent a perfect display of the glory of God, then, were they to render that obedience, it would be an unspeakable disadvantage

to Him and to the universe. And if a perfect obedience from mankind would be such an unspeakable disadvantage to the Most High and to the universe, then it is an unspeakable advantage to the Most High and to the universe, that they do not yield that obedience, but disobey Him precisely as they do. And if it be such an unspeakable advantage to the Most High and to the universe, that mankind disobey Him precisely as they do; because their disobedience enables Him to make a perfect display of His glory, which without that disobedience He could not make; then it is a subject of unspeakable joy, that mankind disobey Him precisely as they do; and it should fill every heart that is friendly to Him with exultation; and the thought, that they will continue to rebel against Him precisely as they will, should fill every such heart with the most exalted satisfaction. And had any of mankind refused to disobey Him precisely as they have, it should be to all His friends a subject of *deep* and everlasting regret; and the thought, that any of them should not hereafter disobey Him precisely as they will, should be unspeakably painful. For since all mankind are under obligation to



desire supremely a perfect display of the divine glory, they are also under obligation to rejoice supremely in the existence of precisely that sum of moral evil which is necessary by a natural necessity to such a display of that glory, and bound supremely to shrink from the desire, that precisely such a sum of sin should not exist. And each individual is bound to rejoice in the existence of all the sins which he commits, as well as in the existence of all the sins the rest of mankind commit; and to rejoice that all the sins shall exist which he shall hereafter commit, as well as that all those, which others shall commit, shall exist.

Now if such are the obligations of mankind, it is obviously impossible that any godly sorrow for sin should be exercised; for what then can godly sorrow for sin be? Is it sorrow for the existence of sin in general? Or is it sorrow for the existence of one's own sins? Or is it sorrow that the overt acts of sin are committed from such motives? Or is it sorrow for sin, in itself considered? Or is it hatred of sin? Or is it part or all of these united? We do not mention each of these, because we regard them as so many different kinds of sorrow, but merely because those

whom we oppose are accustomed to speak of them as such.

If men are under obligation to rejoice supremely, that mankind commit precisely that quantity of sin which they do commit, then,

*First.* Godly sorrow for sin cannot consist in sorrow for the existence of sin in general.

Godly sorrow for sin is a holy sorrow for it; a sorrow involving right views and feelings respecting it, and exercised in compliance with an obligation; and sorrow for sin in general, is sorrow for all the sin of mankind, contemplated as a whole. If then men are under obligation to rejoice in the existence of sin in general, godly sorrow for sin cannot consist in sorrow for the existence of sin in general. First, because it is impossible that the same identical thing should be to them, at the same time, an object both of supreme joy and sorrow. It is absurd to suppose, that precisely the same thing, which is a ground of joy, should, at the same time, be a ground of sorrow. Next, because, if they are under obligation to rejoice in the existence of sin in general, they cannot be under obligation to exercise sorrow for the existence of sin in ge-

neral; for in order that that might be the case, precisely the same thing, which was the ground of the one obligation, must be the ground of the other. But it is absurd to suppose the same identical thing to be the ground of two opposite obligations; since that in it, which would make it the ground of one of the obligations, would prevent its being the ground of the other. And it is absurd too, to suppose they could obey two such opposing obligations; since, as both obligations would rest on them at all times, it would be impossible to comply with one without violating the other. Thirdly, because if right views respecting sin would lead them to rejoice in its existence, right views respecting it could not lead them to sorrow on account of its existence. As then, from the nature of the things, it is impossible that men should, at the same time, both rejoice in the existence of sin in general, and exercise sorrow for it; and impossible also, that they should be under obligation, at the same time, both to rejoice in its existence, and exercise sorrow for it; it is manifest that, if men are under obligation to rejoice in the existence of sin in general, godly sorrow for

sin cannot consist in sorrow for the existence of sin in general.

*Secondly.* Nor for the same reasons can it consist in sorrow for the existence of their *own* sins. It is undoubtedly a fact, that when men exercise godly sorrow for sin, their sorrow respects their own sins, and not the sins of others; yet if they are under obligation to rejoice at the existence of all the sin which exists, their sorrow cannot consist in sorrow for the existence of their own sins; for they are under as high obligation to rejoice at the existence of all the sins, which they have committed, as they are to rejoice at the existence of any of the sins which others have committed. Their sins are as necessary to the glory of God, as the sins of others; and whatever exists in respect to the sins of others, to constitute a reason for rejoicing at their existence, exists equally in regard to their own, to constitute a reason for rejoicing at *their* existence. And it is equally as impossible for them, at the same time, to rejoice in the existence of their own sins, and exercise sorrow for their existence, as it is to rejoice at the existence of the sins of others, and exercise sorrow for their existence.

And if godly sorrow does not consist in sorrow for the existence of their own sins, it does not of course consist in sorrow, that *they* committed those sins; for sorrow, that *they* committed those sins, would be sorrow, that those sins *existed*, since the existence of those sins depended on their committing them. Those identical sins could never exist, unless they were the acts of the identical persons who committed them. And if it would be inconsistent with the glory of God, for any of mankind not to disobey His law, in all those instances in which they do disobey it; then as it would be inconsistent with His glory for any not to commit the identical sins which they do commit, they are bound to rejoice, that *they* do commit those identical sins which they do commit.

Besides, to sorrow because those sins were committed by *themselves*, instead of being committed by others of mankind, would be to sorrow from pure selfishness. They could not desire that those sins should have been committed by others, instead of themselves, for any other reason than that the evils resulting from them might fall on others, instead of falling on themselves; and sorrow arising from such

a source, must surely be the sorrow that worketh death, and not godly sorrow.

*Thirdly.* Nor can it be sorrow that the overt acts of sin were committed from such motives. First, because probably only a small proportion of the sins of men involve any overt acts. They are simple exercises of the heart unaccompanied by any external act. Thus the simple exercise of hatred to God, and malevolence to men, does not involve any overt act. And since therefore men are under obligation to exercise godly sorrow for all their sins, whether they include overt acts or not, it is absurd to suppose that godly sorrow consists simply in sorrow, that the overt acts of sin were committed from wrong motives. Next, because it is absurd to suppose, that many of the overt acts of sin should not be performed from wrong motives. Can the overt act of worshipping an idol be performed from any other than wrong motives? And thirdly, because sorrow that the overt acts of sin were committed from wrong motives, would be sorrow that those acts were sinful; since it is their being performed from wrong motives that constitutes their sinfulness. To exercise sorrow that those sins were com-

mitted from wrong motives, would therefore be to exercise sorrow that those sins exist: since some of the overt acts, such as those of idolatry, could not, from their nature, be committed except from wrong motives; and the others could not be sinful acts, unless performed from wrong motives. But sorrow that those sins exist would not be godly sorrow, because it would be inconsistent with the exercise of joy on account of their existence. If men are bound to rejoice that they committed those identical sinful overt acts; and if those identical overt acts could not have been committed except from wrong motives; then they are bound to rejoice that they committed them from wrong motives, and bound therefore not to exercise sorrow that they committed them from those motives.

*Fourthly.* Nor can it be sorrow for sin in itself considered. Sin, in itself considered, is, as we have already shown, sin considered in respect to its whole nature, as being in all that pertains to it and constitutes it precisely such a thing as it is. Thus any particular sinful act in itself considered, is that act considered in respect to all which pertains to it, and constitutes its nature; that is, its being the

act of the person who exercises it, and being performed at the time and in the circumstances, in respect to knowledge, motives, and every thing else, in which it took place; and its being the violation of that particular command, of which it is a violation, and precisely such a violation of that command as it is; and its being of a nature adapted to produce, or to be employed to produce, precisely the effects which it is adapted to produce, as exciting the divine displeasure, occasioning God to display His justice, or grace, or other attributes; and the cause of punishment, or of penitence, or of other effects to the person who performed it, and of good or of evil to other beings; and so its being in all respects precisely the thing which it is. It is having all that belong to its nature, which really belongs to it, that constitutes it the identical thing which it is; and to consider it in itself as the very identical thing which it is, is to consider it as having all that belong to its nature which really does belong to it. And the same is true of all the sins which mankind commit.

Now from this it is manifest, that if mankind are under obligation to rejoice, that all the sins which they have com-



mitted exist, godly sorrow for sin cannot consist in sorrow for sin, in itself considered. For sorrow for those sins, in themselves considered, would be sorrow, that those sins exist.

Sorrow for those sins, in themselves considered, must be sorrow, either that those sins possess such a nature as they do; or sorrow that they were committed by themselves, and not by others of mankind; or else sorrow that they were committed at all.

If it be sorrow, that those sins possess such a nature as they do, then it is sorrow that those sins exist. For those identical sins could not exist, unless they possessed the nature which they do: it is having precisely all those things belong to their nature, which do belong to it, that constitutes them the identical sins which they are. Were their nature different to any, even the least degree, from what it now is, they would not be the identical sins they now are, but different sins. Sorrow then, that they possess the identical nature they do possess, is sorrow that they do not possess a different nature; and that is, sorrow that they are the identical sins they are, and not different sins. But sorrow that they are the

identical sins, which they are, and not different sins, is sorrow that those identical sins exist that do exist.

Such also is the fact, if sorrow for those sins, in themselves considered, be sorrow that they were committed by themselves, instead of others of mankind. For it constitutes a part of the nature of those sins, that they were committed by the identical persons by whom they were committed, and those identical sins would not exist, except as the acts of the identical persons, whose acts they are. Were they the acts of other persons, they would not be the same, but different sins. Sorrow, therefore, that they are the acts of the identical persons, whose acts they are, is sorrow that those identical sins exist.

And such of course is the fact, if sorrow for those sins be sorrow that they were committed at all. Since, then, sorrow for the sins mankind have committed, in themselves considered, would be sorrow that those sins exist; it is manifest, that if mankind are bound to rejoice that all the sins exist, which they have committed, godly sorrow for those sins cannot be sorrow for them, in themselves considered. If joy that they exist, is

godly joy; sorrow that they exist, cannot be godly sorrow.

*Fifthly.* Neither can godly sorrow for sin be the hatred of sin. First, because the hatred of a thing is not sorrow for it. Hatred and sorrow are exercises essentially different. Hatred of a thing is no more sorrow for it than the love of it, or fear of it, is. And a person may hate many things, without having any sorrow that those things exist. We may, for instance, hate particular kinds of food, without feeling any sorrow that they exist. Since, then, hatred is not sorrow, the hatred of sin cannot be godly sorrow for sin. Secondly, because, if the hatred of sin were sorrow for it, still if mankind are under obligation to rejoice that all the sins exist, which they commit, the hatred of their sins cannot be godly sorrow for them: for if their hatred of them is sorrow for them, it must, as in some of the preceding cases, either be sorrow for the existence of sin in general; or sorrow for the existence of their own sins; or sorrow, that the overt acts of their sins were committed from wrong motives; or else sorrow for sin, in itself considered. But sorrow for their sins, in either of those respects, would, as already shown,

be sorrow for the existence of their sins, which is inconsistent with joy for their existence.

*Sixthly.* Nor, therefore, is godly sorrow for sin, sorrow for it in part or all of those respects united. For if sorrow for sin in each of those respects involves, as has been shown, sorrow that sin exists, and is therefore inconsistent with rejoicing in its existence; then sorrow for it in any two or more of these respects united, must also be sorrow for its existence, and therefore be inconsistent with rejoicing in its existence.

If then mankind are under obligation to rejoice in the existence of all the sins they commit, it is apparent, that they cannot exercise any godly sorrow for them.

Now this consideration demonstrates the truth of our proposition, that did mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, yield a perfect obedience to God, it would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a display of His glory. For mankind are under obligation to exercise godly sorrow for their sins: since it is that sorrow which worketh repentance unto salvation. But if they are under obligation to exercise godly sorrow for their sins; then

they are not under obligation to rejoice in the existence of their sins; since joy in the existence of their sins is, as has been shown, inconsistent with godly sorrow for them. But if they are not under obligation to rejoice in the existence of their sins, then their sins cannot be necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity: For if their sins were necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity, they would, as has been shown, be under obligation to rejoice in their existence. Being under obligation to rejoice in the perfect display of the divine glory, they are, if their sins are necessary to the divine glory, by a natural necessity, under equal obligation to rejoice in the existence of their sins, by which alone a perfect display of the divine glory can be made. But if their sins are not necessary to the glory of God, by a natural necessity, then, did mankind yield a perfect obedience in their place, the glory of God would be displayed to the same perfection as it now is. For if their sins are not necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity, then the necessity of their existence does not arise from any thing peculiar to their nature: but simply from the circumstance, that men

choose to commit those sins, instead of performing acts of obedience. But if all that renders their sins necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory is, that mankind choose to commit those sins, instead of performing acts of obedience, then demonstratively, if mankind were to yield a perfect obedience to God, their sins would not be necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory. And if by their yielding a perfect obedience, their sins would not be necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory, then their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory; and, thence, the same sum of glory would result to God, from the system of events, which would then exist, as redounds to Him from the system of events which now exists.

In the seventh place—

Our proposition is demonstrated to be true by the consideration, that unless it be true, men cannot perform any act from benevolence either towards God or other beings.

If the proposition be not true, then the converse of it is true, that all the sins

which mankind do and shall commit, are necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity. But if all the sins which mankind do and shall commit, are necessary to the glory of God by such a necessity, then mankind can never, in any case, possess any certainty, previous to their acting, whether an act of obedience or of disobedience is necessary to the glory of God in that case. They have no rule of determining, previously to their acting, what is necessary to the glory of God. The divine law is not such a rule. It does not show what, in any case, is necessary to the glory of God, nor what He desires them to do; for His requiring obedience to His law, is no proof that it is necessary to His glory, or consistent with it; neither is reason nor conscience such a rule. Mankind are left in the most absolute uncertainty, until their actions have come into existence, what are necessary to the divine glory, and what are inconsistent with it. In any given case, antecedently to their acting, there is, as far as they are able to decide, at least as great a probability (and perhaps a much greater, for undoubtedly much the largest portion of the actions of mankind are sinful) that the glory of God demands a sinful

action, as that it demands an act of obedience.

But mankind being, antecedently to their acting, in total uncertainty whether the glory of God requires them to act in a sinful or obedient manner, demonstratively, can never act from benevolence towards God or other beings. For to act from benevolence to a being, is to act from *good* will towards him—with a desire to promote his well-being. But if mankind, in every case antecedently to their acting, are in total uncertainty *how* they must act in order to promote the glory of God, they cannot act from benevolence to Him. If they yield an act of apparent obedience to His law, they cannot do it from benevolence to Him, for they must do it in perfect uncertainty whether it is not utterly inconsistent with His glory. And they cannot be actuated by benevolence to Him, in performing an act which they have no assurance is not totally inconsistent with His glory. If they commit an overt transgression of His law, they cannot do it from benevolence to Him; since, as in the other case, they must commit it in absolute uncertainty whether it is not incompatible with His glory; and benevolence could never lead them to perform



an act respecting which they were uncertain, whether it was not totally incompatible with His glory.

In like manner, they can never perform an act from benevolence to other beings. For as that course of conduct is best for the universe which promotes the glory of God; in being uncertain how they must act to promote the glory of God, they are uncertain how they must act to promote the good of other beings.

Nor can they, from benevolence to God or other beings, pause, and suspend acting till they can ascertain in what manner they must act, in order to promote the glory of God and the good of His kingdom; both because they must be in total uncertainty, but that to suspend acting is entirely incompatible with the divine glory and the good of His kingdom; and because, if they suspended acting for the purpose, they could never ascertain, previously to their acting, in what manner they should act, in order to glorify God, and promote the well-being of His kingdom.

And being thus totally unable to do any thing from benevolence to God or other beings, or to do any thing for the *purpose* of promoting the glory of God and the

good of His kingdom, all motives to action derived from the glory of God and the good of His kingdom, are entirely excluded from access to their minds. They are forced to act in all cases from pure selfishness. The only motive to action that can have access to their minds, is the desire of their own happiness; and the only rule of determining, in every case, whether it is best to perform any given act or not, is the dictate of selfishness. God and His government are absolutely annihilated as it respects any moral influence on mankind; and they are under a natural necessity of acting on the principles of Atheism. And being under a natural necessity of acting, in all their conduct, from perfect selfishness, they are of course perfectly justifiable for all their selfish conduct. None of their violations of the divine law, arising from selfishness, involve any guilt. If they possess any moral character, it is virtuous.\*

Since, then, if all the sins which man-

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\* How frequently do men of learning hold principles entirely subversive of each other. Those whom we oppose, are noted as the warmest holders and defenders of the position, in our judgment manifestly true, that all sin consists in the exercise of selfishness. Yet in holding the position, that all the sins mankind do and shall commit, are necessary to the glory of God, for a natural necessity, they hold, as we have shown, that all

kind do and shall commit, are necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity, it is, as we have shown, absolutely impossible that they should perform any act from benevolence towards God, or other beings; and absolutely impossible, by a natural necessity, that they should not, in all their conduct, act from entire selfishness; it is demonstrable, that the sins which mankind do and shall commit, are not necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity. For if it is absolutely impossible, by a natural necessity, that mankind, in any of their conduct, should act from benevolence towards God or other beings, then they plainly cannot be under any *obligation*, in any of their conduct, to act from benevolence. But mankind are under perfect obligation, in all their conduct, to act from benevolence towards God and other beings. For God requires them, in all their conduct, to act from benevolence towards Himself and other beings. His law is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart,

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mankind are under a perfect natural necessity of acting, in all cases, from mere selfishness; and therefore hold virtually, that all holiness, as well as sin, consists in the exercise of selfishness; or else, that mankind never exercise any holiness: and hold also virtually, that men are perfectly excusable and justifiable in acting from pure selfishness.

and with all thy soul, and with all thy strength, and with all thy mind; and thy neighbour as thyself." And an apostle assures us, that "love is the fulfilling of the law." That this love is benevolence, and not the love of character, is apparent from our being required to exercise it towards all mankind, without respect to their character. As the character of most of them is entirely sinful, God cannot have required us to love their character. The love He requires must be good will; or love to them as beings simply, considered abstractly from their character. That the love to God is benevolence, is seen too from our being directed, whether we eat, or drink, or whatever we do, to do all to His glory.

But if mankind are under perfect obligation to be actuated in all their conduct by benevolence towards God and other beings, then there can be no natural impossibility that they should act from benevolence, and no natural necessity of their acting in all their conduct from pure selfishness; since such a necessity would be inconsistent with that obligation. And if there is no natural impossibility of their acting from benevolence towards God and other beings, in any case, then there

can be no natural necessity that mankind should commit all the sins which they do, and shall commit, in order to a perfect display of the divine glory; since, as we have shown, were there such a necessity, that mankind should commit all those sins, it would render it impossible, by a natural necessity, that they should in any case act from benevolence towards God, or other beings. But if there is no natural necessity that mankind should commit all the sins they do and shall commit, in order to a perfect display of the divine glory; then the necessity of their sins does not arise from any thing peculiar to their nature, but solely from the consideration, that mankind, in the circumstances in which they are placed, choose to commit them, instead of yielding obedience to the divine law. But if all that renders their sins necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory is, that mankind choose to commit them, instead of yielding obedience to the divine law, then it follows, that were mankind to yield a perfect obedience to the divine law, their sins would not be necessary to the divine glory; and if, by their yielding a perfect obedience, their sins would not be necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory, then

their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory; and thence the same sum of glory would redound to God from the system of events which would then exist, as results to Him from the system of events that now exists.

The question may perhaps be asked in regard to the whole of our reasoning in support of this proposition—If a perfect obedience from mankind would constitute as good materials as their disobedience does, for a perfect display of the divine glory; and if the same sum of glory would redound to God from the system of events, which would then exist, as does from the present system—why does not God cause them to yield Him a perfect obedience? Why does he suffer them to rebel, and all that evil to exist, which is the consequence of their rebellion? If no more good now exists than would exist, if mankind yielded a perfect obedience to His law, would it not be much better to make them yield such an obedience, and not permit any moral or natural evil to exist in our world?

To this we reply, that our proposition is, that were mankind, *in the circumstances*

*in which they are actually placed*, to yield a perfect obedience, then their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory; that is, if they would yield that obedience, while He employs only that specific quantity of means which He now employs, to induce them to yield such an obedience; and while an obedience is attended with all the difficulties with which it is now attended. Our proposition does not affirm, that any supposable obedience whatever from mankind would be as good materials as their disobedience is for a perfect display of the glory of God, without any consideration, whether or not He must place them in different circumstances from those in which they now exist, in order to lead them to that obedience; that is, whether or not He must use a much greater quantity of means, than He now employs, to lead them to yield that obedience. He cannot use any more means than He now employs to induce them to yield Him a perfect obedience, without placing them in circumstances different from those in which they now exist. And since, if they are not disposed, under the influence of that quantity of means He now employs

to yield Him obedience, He cannot lead them to yield Him obedience without employing a larger quantity of means—He cannot lead them to yield Him obedience without placing them in new circumstances.

The reason, therefore, that although were they to yield Him, in the circumstances in which they are now placed, a perfect obedience, it would be as good materials as their disobedience is for a perfect display of His glory, still God does not cause them to yield a perfect obedience, is, that He cannot cause them to yield such an obedience without placing them in circumstances different from those in which they now exist. The obedience, which would be as good materials for a perfect display of His glory, as their disobedience is, is an obedience rendered in the precise circumstances in which they now exist; that is, an obedience rendered while they are subjected to the precise quantity of influence of every kind to which they are now subjected. An obedience, therefore, rendered in any other circumstances, were He supposed to lead them to render it, would not be the obedience which, according to the proposition, would be as good ma-



materials for a perfect display of His glory, as their disobedience is.

Is the question asked, Granting that God in order to lead mankind to yield a perfect obedience, must use a greater quantity of means to lead them to yield it, than He now employs; and that by using a greater quantity of means, He would place them in circumstances different from those in which they now exist: still if, were they to yield a perfect obedience, in the circumstances in which they now exist, it would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of His glory, why would not an obedience also, yielded in those circumstances in which He must place mankind, in order that they may be induced to yield that obedience?

To this we reply, that the value of an obedience from mankind, as a means of displaying the divine glory, depends on the degree of love to God which is involved and expressed in that obedience. An obedience expressing or involving the exercise of an hundred degrees of love to God, is worth an hundred times more than an obedience involving the exercise of only one degree of love to Him. Thus the obedience of Abram, in offering his

son Isaac, because it involved and expressed a high degree of love to God, was of much greater value than a common act of obedience. But the degree of love involved and expressed in an act of obedience depends on the quantity of means, or of influence, which is employed to bring that act into existence. An act performed under only one degree of influence to excite to its performance, is worth an hundred times as much as a similar act performed under an hundred degrees of influence to excite to its performance. Thus a given overt act of perfect obedience to God from a heathen, would involve a much higher degree of love to God, than a similar overt act from one enjoying the knowledge of the gospel. A heathen seeing only a dim vision of the divine Being, must love what he saw, in order to yield Him a perfect obedience, much more strongly than a person enjoying the knowledge of the gospel would a similar exhibition of the divine Being, if all he saw of Him was only sufficient to lead him to perform that act. Were the whole heathen world, in the circumstances in which they exist, to yield a perfect obedience to the Most High, observing the law of benevolence

in all their conduct; that obedience would involve and express a much higher degree of love to God, and much higher moral excellence, than a similar obedience would from those who live under the reign of the gospel, if all the knowledge they possess, and all the influence exerted on them to induce them to obey, were only sufficient to induce them to yield that obedience. For if all the knowledge of God, His will, and His purposes, which they possess, and all the influence exerted on them to induce them to obey, were only sufficient to induce them to yield that obedience; then place them in circumstances, in which they should be subjected to a less influence, prompting them to obedience, as in circumstances like those of the heathen, and they would not yield obedience. On the other hand, place the heathen, supposed in their present circumstances to yield such an obedience, under all the light and influence exerted on the others, and which are barely sufficient to produce obedience in them; and the heathen would rise to a more exalted obedience, and display a higher degree of moral excellence. They would love all the divine character, then revealed to

their view, as intensely as they did that part of it they saw before.

As then the value of an act of obedience, as a means of displaying the divine glory, depends on the degree of love involved and exercised in it, and the degree of love depends on the quantity of influence which is employed to excite to its performance; it is apparent, that the value of an act of obedience depends on the quantity of means employed to excite to that act. An act which only the influence of a given quantity of means was required to excite, is of greater worth than a similar act which the influence of a greater quantity of means was required to excite.

Were mankind then to yield a perfect obedience under that share of influence now exerted on them to excite them to obedience, their obedience would be of greater worth, as a means of displaying the divine glory, than an obedience which a more powerful influence was required to excite them to perform. An obedience in their present circumstances would involve and express a higher degree of love to the Most High, it being more spontaneous, than an obedience which a larger quantity of influence was required to excite;

it would be a much more strong and expressive testimony to His worthiness of a perfect obedience from mankind, and constitute a larger tribute of praise to His character and His government, and therefore be more glorious to Him.

The reason, then, that though an obedience from mankind in the circumstances in which they now exist, would be as good materials as their disobedience is for a perfect display of the divine glory; still an obedience rendered under that increased degree of influence, which God must use to lead them to that obedience, would not be, is, that from the greater quantity of influence that would be required to excite that obedience, it would involve and express a less degree of love to God, and therefore be less glorious to Him.

These several arguments then, demonstrate the truth of the position, that did mankind yield, in the circumstances in which they exist, a perfect obedience to the divine government, their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory; and the same sum of glory would result to the Most High from the system of events which would then exist.

as redounds to Him from the system of events that now exists. And if this be true of mankind, it is likewise true, undoubtedly, of all sinful beings.

We are now prepared to show, by deductions from the truth thus established, the erroneousness of the peculiar views entertained by those whom we oppose, on the subject of moral evil. We shall also take the liberty of directing the eye of our readers from the point, to which we have conducted them, over some other fields of theological truth, involved, according to the ordinary exhibitions of them, in some obscurity; in the persuasion that, contemplated in their relation to this subject, they will be seen somewhat more clearly. We shall present for consideration, likewise, some thoughts as conclusions from the whole subject.

*First.* If the position we have endeavoured to demonstrate be true, then it is apparent, that the sins of mankind are not necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity. The reason of their existing is not that they are from their nature necessary to the glory of God, and that His glory could not possibly by any means be perfectly displayed, if those

sins were not to exist: for we have shown, that a perfect obedience from mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of the divine glory. Their disobedience, therefore, is no more necessary on account of its nature to the divine glory, than their obedience is. And were mankind to yield a perfect obedience, their disobedience would not be necessary to the divine glory, by any necessity whatever. The only ground of necessity, that either their obedience or disobedience should exist, in order to a display of the divine glory, is, that materials are necessary to a display of that glory. And since their obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is, for a perfect display of that glory, no necessity arises out of the nature of either of them, that that should exist instead of the other, in order that that display might be made. And since one of them is, as far as it respects its nature, as good materials as the other, for that display, then if either of them existed, there would then exist all the materials which are necessary to a perfect display of the divine glory; and there would be no necessity

that the other should exist in order to that display. If, therefore, mankind were to yield a perfect obedience to God, their disobedience would not then, by any necessity whatever, be necessary to a perfect display of His glory.

The sins of mankind, therefore, exist, not because from their nature they are indispensable to a perfect display of the divine glory; but simply, because mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, choose to commit them, instead of yielding a perfect obedience to the divine government. That is, they exist only by a *moral*, not a natural necessity. And the only reason that God permits them to come into existence as they do is, that He cannot lead mankind to yield a perfect obedience, without employing such a quantity of means as is inconsistent with a perfect display of His glory.

Sin is of no more value to the extent to which it exists, nor to any extent, than holiness as a means of displaying the divine glory. It is no more necessary, that mankind should commit the sins they do, nor that they should commit any sins, that the glory of God may be perfectly displayed, than it is, that they should sin



in all the instances in which they yield obedience, that His glory may be displayed. All that can be said in favour of it is, that existing to the extent, and in the circumstances in which it does in our world, the evils naturally resulting from it, are not irremediable; God is able to and does overrule it, in such a manner, that on the whole the same sum of glory results to Him from the system of events that now exists, as would result to Him were mankind to yield Him a perfect obedience.

If then, the sins of mankind are not necessary to the glory of God, mankind are not under any obligation to rejoice in their existence. As neither the glory of God is displayed, nor the good of His kingdom promoted to any greater extent, than they would be, were none of those sins committed; no ground of rejoicing that they are committed exists.

And godly sorrow for sin, therefore, does not exclude sorrow for the existence of sin, but actually includes it. For godly sorrow for sin must be, either sorrow for the existence of sin in general, or sorrow for the existence of our own sins, or sorrow for sin, in itself considered, or sorrow for the motives from which sinful acts

are committed, or part or all of them united. But sorrow for sin in any of those respects would, as we have shown, include sorrow for the existence of sin. And since godly sorrow for sin necessarily includes sorrow for its existence, mankind are under all the obligation to exercise sorrow for the existence of sin, that they are to exercise godly sorrow for sin. The obligation of mankind to sorrow that they have committed the sins which they have committed, is as great as their obligation was not to have committed those sins. For whatever constitutes a ground of obligation *not* to have committed those sins, constitutes a reason for sorrow that they have committed them.

The fact that God institutes such a system of measures in regard to their sins, that He secures as large a display of His glory as would exist, were mankind perfectly obedient, no more annihilates, nor diminishes their obligation most deeply to lament that they have committed those sins, than it does their obligation not to have committed them.

They cannot, indeed, if they have a proper sense of their obligations, avoid feeling a lively sorrow, that they have

violated them. As a proper sense of their obligations will awaken an ardent desire to comply with them, so it will excite an ardent wish that they always had complied with them, and therefore a lively sorrow for the violation of them. And as mankind are bound to feel a proper sense of their obligation to yield a perfect obedience to the Most High, they are therefore equally bound to lament deeply that they have not yielded that obedience. Thus the position of those whom we oppose, respecting the necessity of sin, is shown to be erroneous; and also the several conclusions they deduce from it, respecting the feelings with which moral evil should be contemplated by men.

*Secondly.* If a perfect obedience from mankind, in the circumstances in which they exist, would be as good materials for a perfect display of the glory of God as their disobedience is: and if, therefore, sin is not necessary to His glory by a natural necessity, then mankind are not, as those teach whom we oppose, under obligation to be willing to be everlastingly the enemies of God, in order that His glory may be promoted. As all the sins they would commit, were they to be forever the enemies of God, are not at all

necessary to His glory, and would not promote it to any greater degree than a perfect obedience from them would, no ground exists for desiring that those sins should be committed, in order that the glory of God may be promoted, and therefore no motive for being willing to be enemies to God for ever for that purpose. And as there is no reason or motive whatever for being willing to be enemies to God for ever to promote His glory, mankind are not under obligation to be willing to be His enemies for ever to promote His glory. They are no more under obligation to be willing to be His enemies to promote His glory, than they are to be willing to be any thing else which is not at all necessary to promote His glory. But, on the contrary, they are under the highest obligation *not* to be willing to be His enemies for ever. They are under all the obligation *not* to be willing to be His enemies, that they are *to be* willing to be His friends. They are under all the obligation *not* to be willing to commit all the sins they would commit should they be His enemies for ever, that they are to be willing to exercise all the holiness they would exercise should they yield Him a perfect obedience for ever.

As they are under the highest obligation never to sin against Him, so they are under the highest obligation never to be willing to sin against, but ever to choose to yield Him a complete obedience. For not being willing to be His enemies, and to sin against Him, and being willing to be His friends, and ever to yield Him a perfect obedience, are precisely the same thing.

Those, therefore, whom we oppose, err in teaching, that unconditional submission to God includes a willingness to be His enemies, and the objects of His wrath for ever, to promote His glory. For since mankind are under the highest obligation not to exercise a willingness to be the enemies of God for ever, to exercise such willingness is rebellion against Him, instead of submission to His will. And they err also in making a willingness to be His enemies for ever, for the promotion of His glory, a test of piety; since the exercise of such a willingness is the most unmixed rebellion against Him, instead of obedience. And therefore all the conclusions respecting Christian character, which have been formed by making that willingness a test of piety, have been false conclusions; and all the hopes of heaven,

which have been built on the exercise of that willingness as an evidence of piety, have been false hopes.

*Thirdly.* The atonement was made for all mankind. It constituted a provision for the pardon of all of them, if they would accept it. It was made for them as moral agents; and removed every obstacle out of the way except the enmity of their hearts, and left nothing to do to gain salvation, but to change their conduct from rebellion to obedience, by complying with the Gospel. In proof of this it may be observed, that salvation through the atonement is offered to all mankind, and all are required to accept it; and, as we have shown, were all to comply with that requisition, it would be perfectly consistent with the highest glory of God. But the compliance of all with the Gospel, would not be consistent with His glory, unless the atonement was made for all. For God has promised to save all who yield obedience to the Gospel; and were all mankind to yield the obedience required, He would be under obligation, from His promise, to confer the blessings of salvation on them all. Were the atonement then made for only a part of mankind, He would be necessitated to save

the rest, did they obey the Gospel as they are required and bound to do, without an atonement. But that would not be consistent with His glory, but would spread clouds of impenetrable darkness over the whole glory of the work of redemption, and destroy, in the view of His creatures, the proofs of the perfection of His moral character. For, 1st, in saving a part of mankind without an atonement for their sins, He would virtually declare that no atonement was necessary for the salvation of the others, and exhibit Himself as having acted unwisely in providing an atonement for them. If the sins of a part of mankind could be forgiven without expiation, where could be the necessity of an expiation for those of the other part? If He could open the gates of heaven to a part of our race without a Mediator, why not to the rest?

2dly. Were He to grant salvation to any without an atonement for their sins, He would violate the pledge given to this and other worlds, in the penalty of the law, that sin should not escape the expression of His displeasure. In annexing the penalty to the law, He expressed the purpose, were it violated, of vindicating His rights, and maintaining the honour of His government. But where would be

the execution of that threatening, if part of mankind were saved without an atonement? Would such an omission of it, and such a disregard to the claims of justice, be consistent with His glory? Would it not occasion the rest of the universe to ask, Where, in respect to those of mankind whose sins are thus left unexpiated and unpunished, are the proofs that the moral Governor regards rebellion as such an infringement of His rights as His law exhibits it; or that it is necessarily incompatible with the happiness of creatures; or that the penalty shall be executed on those who may in future choose to transgress?

3dly. In saving any with their guilt unexpiated, He would pronounce a sentence of justification on their guilt. No atonement having been made for them, He could not save them from respect to any thing out of themselves; and, regarding their character solely, to accept them as meet for the heavenly inheritance, would be to pronounce on them a sentence of entire approbation. But would it be consistent with His glory so to justify rebellion, and declare it to be worthy of such a reward? or thus to abandon His law, and pronounce the institution of it unwise? or, by exhibiting such a pros-



pect not only of impunity but of approbation and reward, to present to the rest of the universe an inducement to rebellion?

4thly. In saving them for accepting Christ Jesus as their atoning sacrifice, in obedience to the requisition of the Gospel, He would act precisely as though He saved them out of respect to the atonement of Christ; and thereby virtually declare, that the atonement of Christ was made for them as well as the rest of mankind. But if the atonement of Christ had no relation whatever to them, would it be consistent with His glory to save them from respect to that atonement, or to declare that He did? Would it, to save them for accepting a salvation as provided for them, which was not provided for them? Were the fallen angels to accept of Christ's atonement as made for themselves, could God, consistently on the ground of their acceptance, grant them "an inheritance among them that are sanctified?"

It would not then be consistent with the glory of God to save all mankind, were they to yield a perfect obedience to the Gospel, unless the atonement of Christ was made for all. But we have proved it to be consistent with His glory to save all, should they actually comply with the Gospel. Our proof of that truth, there-

fore, involves proof that the atonement was made for all.

*Fourthly.* Since it is an obedience from mankind, in the identical circumstances in which they exist, that would be perfectly glorious to God, and not an obedience in other circumstances, it is apparent that no objection can be made to his benevolence, because he does not cause them to yield him a perfect obedience. As mankind are not disposed to yield him a perfect obedience, in the circumstances in which they now exist, He cannot cause them to yield Him a perfect obedience without employing a more powerful influence, exciting them to obedience, and thereby placing them in different circumstances. But an obedience, which such an increased influence was required to excite, would not, as has been shown, be as good materials for a display of His glory, as an obedience rendered under only that degree of influence which is now exerted on them. It would not express so much love to him, nor be so high a testimony to the rectitude of his authority, and the reasonableness of his laws, and to His worthiness of such a service from mankind. Nor, since it would not be as good materials for the display of His glory, as an obedience in their present circum-

stances, would it be as good materials as their present disobedience is for that end. It would not be consistent with His glory, therefore, to exert on them an influence causing them to yield Him a perfect obedience, nor any greater influence of that kind than that to which they are now subjected; for it would prevent a perfect display of His glory. The system of events which would then exist would not be as good materials for a display of His glory as either the system which now exists, or that system which would exist, were mankind, in their present circumstances, to yield a perfect obedience to His will.

And as it would be inconsistent with His glory, so it would be with His benevolence, to exert on mankind such an influence, causing them to yield Him a perfect obedience. Perfect benevolence will lead Him to that course of administration which shall secure a perfect display of His glory. For He displays His glory by doing good, or promoting happiness; and promoting happiness is exercising benevolence. The display of His glory and the exercise of His benevolence are precisely commensurate; and that course of administration therefore, which secures a perfect display of His glory,

will involve the exercise of perfect benevolence. As then, to exert on mankind an influence causing them to yield a perfect obedience, would be inconsistent with a perfect display of His glory, so it would be equally inconsistent with the exercise of perfect benevolence. Benevolence forbids, instead of requiring that He should exert such an influence on them.

God has thus made all the provision for the perfect obedience of mankind, which perfect benevolence required Him to make. He exerts on them all the influence exciting them to holiness, which it is consistent with benevolence to exert. No objection, therefore, against His perfect benevolence can be made from His not causing men to yield Him a perfect obedience, by exerting on them a more powerful influence. He has raised all the barriers against the introduction of sin into the world which benevolence could rear.

It may perhaps be still objected that, granting that as mankind are, existing in the circumstances in which they do exist, it is inconsistent with perfect benevolence for God to exert on them any greater influence than He now exerts on them, exciting them to obedience; yet may it not have been inconsistent with perfect bene-

volence to have *placed* them in circumstances in which it would be incompatible with benevolence to exert on them an influence that should cause them to yield a perfect obedience?

To this we reply—If God conducts towards mankind with perfect benevolence, in the circumstances in which they now exist, we are bound to draw the conclusion, that He acted with perfect benevolence also in *placing* them in those circumstances. If we see nothing in his conduct which is not perfectly benevolent, we have no ground to infer that any of His conduct is not perfectly so. If all that we understand of His administration is perfectly benevolent, we are bound to conclude, that all that with which we are not entirely acquainted is also perfectly benevolent. Were mankind indeed the only order of beings in the universe, we are unable to decide that benevolence would not demand their being placed in precisely the circumstances in which they are placed. The right belongs to the Most High, as their Creator and Moral Governor, of placing them in circumstances of trial, that it may be seen by experiment whether they love Him as they ought, and will choose Him above every thing else. And there is a necessity of

His exercising that right, since there would be an impropriety in His bestowing on them the gift of His everlasting favour before they had given any proof that they would yield Him their everlasting love. And who can say that a fair and decisive trial of their character could be made without placing them in circumstances like those in which they are placed. In order that they should be decisively tested, would it not be necessary that God should withdraw from them all the assisting influences of His Spirit, and leave them under all the influence which the devil and the world could exert in them, to make their choice between Him and His works, of their portion? Could it be shown, that they would love Him with all their hearts in *all* circumstances, and were therefore worthy to be crowned with the high rewards of His kingdom, unless they had shown that they would, by actually loving Him with all their hearts, when subjected to the most powerful temptation that could be presented to them.

But if, were mankind the only order of beings in the universe, benevolence would not require that they should be placed in circumstances of trial like those in which they are now placed; yet, as there are undoubtedly innumerable other orders,

each of which is probably placed in circumstances peculiar to itself, who can find it difficult to believe that benevolence should require mankind to be placed in those peculiar circumstances in which they exist.

*Fifthly.* If our proposition be true, then it will be seen at the day of judgment, that God has always arranged His moral and providential government so, that the highest glory of His name, and the highest good of all mankind, have always been perfectly consistent with each other. For the course which, in all the circumstances in which they have been placed, He required them to pursue, would, had they chosen to pursue it, have conducted them all to perfect and eternal blessedness, and at the same time been perfectly glorious to Him. The same sum of glory would have redounded to Him as results from the present system of events; and they, instead of being, without exception, the victims of misery in this world, and perishing for ever in innumerable multitudes, would all have been crowned with perfect and everlasting safety and happiness.

As He required them to be actuated by perfect benevolence to Him and all other beings, so He will be seen to have

been actuated by it towards them in all the measures of His moral and providential government.

He will be seen to have made as ample provision in all those measures, for their happiness, in proportion to its value, as He did for His own and the happiness of His kingdom. Such provision indeed He must have made, if actuated towards them by benevolence.

Benevolence must have led Him to place precisely that value on their perfect happiness which really belongs to it; and that is precisely the value which belongs to the same sum of happiness, enjoyed by any being or beings. It must have led Him, therefore, to consult their happiness as much, according to its value, as His own and the happiness of other beings, and to make as good provision for it. Their perfect happiness is as desirable, according to the quantity of it, as is the perfect happiness of any being or beings. It would have been inconsistent with benevolence to have made no provision for their perfect happiness, but to have placed them in circumstances in which they were subjected by a natural necessity to perfect and eternal misery; for that would have been placing a less value on their happiness than belongs to



it, and than was placed on an equal portion of the happiness of other beings.

Benevolence also must have led Him to place precisely that value on His own perfect happiness, and on that of all other beings, which belongs to it; and to have consulted His own happiness and that of His kingdom, in proportion to their value, as much as He did the perfect happiness of mankind.

And He did thus consult His own and the happiness of His kingdom, and the happiness of mankind, each according to their value, by requiring mankind to pursue a course of conduct, which if pursued would have secured the perfect happiness both of God and His kingdom, and of themselves. And in doing that, He made all the provision it belonged to Him to make for the perfect happiness of mankind.

We see then, that all the objections made by men against the divine benevolence, on the ground that they are not perfectly happy, are entirely groundless. For if He has given to their interests all the attention to which, compared with His own and the interests of all other beings, they are entitled, if He has made all the provision for their perfect happiness which it belonged to perfect benevo-

lence to make, then their not being perfectly happy is no ground for the conclusion, that He is not perfectly benevolent. If He has consulted their highest good, as much in proportion to its value as He has His own, they have no ground, if they are not perfectly happy, to complain that He has wantonly and unjustly sacrificed their happiness to promote His own glory. If He has placed their perfect happiness within their attainment, and placed them under the obligation and under the influence of powerful motives to accept it; and if the only reason that they do not possess it is, that they voluntarily reject it, they surely have no reason to ascribe their unhappiness to a want of benevolence in Him. Benevolence certainly is not obliged to force beings to be happy. It is enough for it to make suitable provision for their happiness, and cause their attainment of it to depend on their complying with their obligations.

*Sixthly.* We see from the truth which we have established, that all mankind, if they will yield obedience to the gospel, may be saved, notwithstanding God has elected only a part of them to be the heirs of salvation.

For since, were they to yield a perfect obedience, that obedience would be as good materials as their disobedience is,

for a perfect display of God's glory, it is perfectly consistent with His glory that they should all accept salvation, and become partakers of its blessings. He will not be glorified any more in consequence of the sins which they shall commit, and by which they shall perish, than He would be by their yielding a perfect obedience to the gospel, and partaking of its salvation.

And his having elected only a part of mankind to salvation, does not throw any obstacle in the way of the other's being saved. His purpose of election is simply the purpose of bestowing on a certain portion of mankind, besides the other means of grace, the renewing influences of His spirit, by which they shall be led to comply with the offers of the gospel. It is not a purpose, that the others shall not without those influences accept salvation; nor that if they do, they shall not be saved. Nor did God form the purpose of applying the atonement of Christ to only a part of mankind by the renewing influences of the Spirit, because it was inconsistent with His glory, that the rest should be saved, if they would accept salvation without the Spirit's influences; but simply because it was inconsistent with His glory to bestow those in-

fluences on any more of mankind. Were all the impenitent, therefore, immediately to reform and comply with the gospel, God would be perfectly glorified, and they would all be saved, His purpose of election notwithstanding; for it is perfectly consistent with His purpose of election, that all mankind should comply with the gospel and be saved, if they will, without the influence of the Spirit. The door of the divine kingdom is entirely open to the access of all who are not the objects of His electing grace, if they are disposed to enter it. No obstacle exists on the part of the divine glory, nor of the divine will, but only in their choice. All objections, therefore, to the doctrine of election, as though it were an obstacle to the salvation of those who are not the objects of election; or as though it presented discouragements to all efforts on their part to obtain salvation, are entirely groundless. Since it is not at all God's purpose of election that forms the ground of certainty, that they shall not obtain salvation, but wholly their choice to reject salvation, that constitutes that ground of certainty. God's purpose respecting the elect has no influence whatever on the non-elect. They stand on precisely the same ground respecting the possibi-

lity of their gaining salvation, and the ground of certainty, that they will not gain it, on which they would stand, if no such purpose existed.

*Seventhly.* We see from the truth of our proposition, that God does not create the sinful volitions of mankind. If God created the sinful volitions of mankind, then the reason of their existing instead of holy volitions, would not lie at all in mankind themselves, as mankind themselves would not be in any sense the cause of the existence of their volitions; of course they would not be the cause of their *nature*. As their volitions would owe their *existence* solely to God, so they would of course be indebted to Him solely for their *nature*. He would be the sole author of them; and we should look to Him alone for the reason, that they were sinful, instead of holy volitions.

But if God created all the volitions of mankind, since, as we have shown, the existence of sin is not at all necessary to the perfect display of His glory, He would never create any but holy volitions; for no possible reason could exist for His ever creating sinful volitions. If He created all the volitions of mankind, then the reason of His creating one kind, instead of the other, must lie wholly in the

*nature* of those volitions. No reason for creating one kind instead of the other, could be found in the *means* necessary to give them existence; since precisely the same means, His own omnipotent volition, and that alone, would be necessary in each case; and therefore the reason for creating one kind, instead of the other, must arise wholly from the *nature* of the volitions themselves. And if any thing in the nature of one class constituted a reason for creating that class instead of the other, it must be either a superior adaptation to promote His glory; or if they were equal in that respect, an intrinsic excellence of that class above the other. But God could never create the sinful volitions of mankind, because they are better adapted than holy volitions, as materials for displaying His glory; for as we have shown they are not. No higher sum of glory can result to Him from the existence of the sinful volitions, than would result to Him from the existence of holy volitions in their place. If then He were to create one kind of volitions in preference to the other, it must be on the ground of its possessing a superior intrinsic excellence. But God could never create sinful volitions in preference to holy ones, on the ground of

their possessing the greatest intrinsic excellence, since they do not possess any intrinsic excellence at all, but are intrinsically vile and odious, and the object of His supreme hatred. But holy volitions are intrinsically excellent, and the objects of His entire love. Since then, if God created the volitions of mankind, He could never create one kind in preference to another, except it were on the ground of their superior intrinsic excellence; and since He could never on that ground create any except holy volitions, we have an infallible certainty that He does not create the sinful volitions of mankind.

The theory, therefore, of Doctor Emmons respecting God's agency on mankind, by which he represents the Most High as creating all their actions, holy and sinful, is, at least as far as it respects their sinful actions, entirely erroneous.

*Eighthly.* And since God does not create any of the sinful actions of mankind, the proper method of exhibiting His agency respecting the existence of their sins, is, after the manner of President Edwards and most Calvinistic divines, that of representing Him as *permitting* mankind to exert their sinful actions. As God does not *create* any of their sinful actions, He

is not the *efficient cause* of those actions; that is, they are not exerted by His power. Of course they are exerted by the power of mankind themselves, and mankind are therefore the *efficient causes* of them; for that being is the efficient cause of an effect, who possesses and exerts the power by which that effect is produced. As then mankind are the efficient causes of all their sinful actions, it is literally true that God *permits* them to exert those actions, and philosophically correct to exhibit His agency as concerned in that manner in the existence of their sins. For, in the first place, God upholds mankind in existence, and in the possession of all the powers which are exerted in the exercise of those actions, and thereby gives them opportunity to act. Next, He places them in the circumstances in which they exist at the time of exerting their sinful actions, and subjects them to all the influences of every kind to which they are subjected; and thereby gives them opportunity to exert those particular actions which they do exert. And thence, thirdly, the reason that they exercise those sinful actions instead of others, is, that He leaves them to act under precisely those influences to which they are subjected, instead of exerting on them a different influence that



would prevent their sinning, and lead them to yield Him a perfect obedience. He, therefore, *permits* them to exercise their sinful actions.

He determines the existence before their minds of all the motives that exist there at the time, and in the circumstances in which they exist, and determines also the precise kind and degree of influence exerted by those motives; and thereby constitutes a ground of certainty that, unless some preventing influence is interposed, they will exert all their sinful actions. And, as it is His prerogative to exert that influence which would prevent their sinning, and lead them to yield a perfect obedience; in withholding that influence, He *permits* them to sin in the manner in which they do.

No valid objection, therefore, can be made to His conduct, in regard to the sins of mankind, on the ground that it represents mankind themselves as the efficient causes of their sinful actions, instead of ascribing the efficient causation of them to God; since mankind are the efficient causes of their sinful actions, and truth and the divine glory demand that they be represented as such. For to deny that they are the efficient causes of their actions, is not only to deny the fact in re-

spect to the efficient causation of them, but is also to deny that mankind are moral agents, and worthy of blame on account of their sins. And to exhibit God as the efficient cause of their sinful actions, is not only to contradict the fact respecting their efficient causation, but is also to ascribe all the guilt of those sins to Him.

Nor can this mode of exhibiting His conduct, respecting the sins of mankind, be justly or plausibly charged with representing mankind as exempted from the Divine control in all their sinful actions, and thereby contradicting the doctrine of God's universal government. For mankind are no more exempted from the Divine control by being the efficient causes of their sinful actions, than they would be were God the efficient cause of those actions.

Though they are the efficient causes of their sinful actions, yet they are universally and absolutely dependent on God, and entirely under His control. They are entirely dependent on Him for existence, and for all the powers and properties which belong to their constitution. It is He who upholds them and every thing pertaining to their constitution by the word of His power. They are, there-

fore, wholly under His control, as it respects their existence and all the powers and properties of their constitution. They are also entirely dependent on Him for the mode in which they exercise their powers. He lays the foundation of the certainty, that all those motives shall exist before their minds that do exist there, and at the time and in the circumstances in which they exist, and that they shall possess precisely that kind and degree of influence which they do possess; and thereby lays the foundation of the certainty that mankind shall act in precisely that mode in which they do act. Mankind are therefore wholly under His control in respect to the mode of their acting. And being thus entirely under His control in regard to their existence and all that pertains to their constitution, and in regard to the mode in which they act; they are as universally and absolutely under His control as they can be. For, their existence and the powers and properties of their constitution, and the exercise of their powers in their actions, are all that can be predicated of them. And if they are entirely under His control in regard to every thing that can be predicated of them, they are as universally

and absolutely under His control as they can be, and, therefore, as much so as they would be were He the efficient cause of their sinful actions.

God's government of mankind consists in His placing them, (as moral agents,) by an agency direct or indirect, under precisely all those influences in kind and degree to which they are subjected, and under no others whatever; and thereby laying the foundation of a certainty that they shall act in precisely the mode in which they do act. Or it consists in His subjecting them to precisely those influences, and no others whatever, under which they voluntarily exercise *their own powers* in exerting precisely that series of actions which they do exert; and does not consist in His creating their actions. And such, from the nature of moral agents, must be the nature of a moral government over them; and such is the uniform decision of common sense on the subject. We presume no one whose common sense had not been strangled by the hand of false philosophy, ever conceived of God's government of moral agents, as consisting in any thing else than His determining the mode in which they act, or His exerting such an agency respecting them, that they in consequence of it, voluntari-

ly exercise their own power in exerting precisely that series of actions which they do exert.

No foundation whatever, therefore, exists for the objections, made by those whom we oppose, to this mode of exhibiting the conduct of God respecting the sins of mankind.

*Finally.* This subject has been the theme of much erroneous reasoning and incorrect belief. The number of those is not small, who have held the position, nor has only a small number of conversations and sermons been employed to prove it, that all the sin which exists, and shall exist in the universe, is necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity; and that had mankind or devils yielded a perfect obedience, in place of committing the sins which they have committed, or were they hereafter to yield obedience, instead of sinning, as they will sin, they would cast a veil over the glories of Jehovah, and dry up the streams of blessedness which flow to His creatures from His throne: and who, therefore, as a consequence of that position, have held, that God absolutely desires mankind and devils to sin in all the instances in which they do and shall sin; and have laboured to vindicate His benevolence, or illustrate

His wisdom in desiring and permitting sin to exist, in order that a perfect display of His glory might be made; and who thence have also held, that it is the duty of men and devils to rejoice in the existence of their sins, as the necessary means of displaying the divine glory. And in holding and advocating these positions, they have virtually embraced and advocated a mass of other appalling errors. In holding that the sins of mankind are necessary to the glory of God by a natural necessity, they have virtually, as we have shown, denied the perfections of God, by affirming, that He has required mankind to pursue a course of conduct which would be unspeakably dishonourable to Him, and destructive to His own and the happiness of His kingdom. In holding, that God does not really desire mankind to yield Him obedience in any of the instances in which they do not, and that He absolutely desires them to commit all the sins they do commit, they deny his veracity by charging Him with uttering a declaration that is not true. in affirming that He has given to mankind in the sacred volume a revelation of His *will* respecting their conduct; and in affirming explicitly in various declarations in that volume, and impliedly in all its requisitions of obe-

dience, that he does not desire mankind to sin against Him in any instance whatever, but absolutely desires them to yield him a perfect obedience. In holding, that mankind are under obligation to rejoice in the existence of all the sins which they commit, they hold, as we have shown, that they are under obligation not to exercise any godly sorrow for sin; and therefore charge God with inconsistency in requiring them to exercise that sorrow. In holding, that it would be inconsistent with the glory of God for mankind to yield a perfect obedience to His law, they hold, as we have shown, that mankind might, in the exercise of perfect benevolence, do infinite injury to Him and His kingdom, and thereby involve themselves in the contradiction of affirming, that perfect benevolence towards God and His kingdom is not perfect benevolence towards them, but malevolence. In holding, that it is utterly inconsistent with the divine glory for mankind to yield a perfect obedience to the divine government, they hold, as has been demonstrated, that mankind are totally destitute of any rule of determining, previously to their acting, what they must do in order to promote the glory of God, and thereby declare it to be utterly impossible, by a natural im-

possibility, for mankind to do any thing from benevolence towards God or any other being; and thence, that they are under the most absolute natural necessity of acting in all their conduct from perfect selfishness, and so involve themselves in the contradiction of affirming, that mankind are perfectly justifiable in all their sinful conduct. And in attempting to demonstrate and justify these several views, they have involved themselves in various other absurdities; as that, there is a difference between a thing, in itself considered, and all things considered; that a thing may be absolutely good, and absolutely evil, at the same time; that a thing may be absolutely desirable, and absolutely undesirable at the same time; that God may desire a thing, and not desire it, at the same time; and that men may, at the same time, be under two opposite and equal obligations.

And they have not merely held these contradictions to be the truth of God, but have contended for them as the most important part of divine truth, as the very basis on which many of the other truths of the Gospel rest, and from which they derive their harmony and efficiency; have made them the most essential articles in a creed of orthodoxy, and poured a storm of invective on all who ventured to reject



them, as babes in knowledge, weak in the faith, heretics. They have thus desecrated religion, by attempting to rend away from her the robes of her simplicity and purity, and compelling her to the parentage of these abortions of science, falsely so called.

We are aware that we impose an ungrateful task in calling them to fix the seal of illegitimacy on the most favoured offspring of their theological speculations; to renounce, as unsound, those reasonings on which they have reared no mean reputation for logical depth and adroitness; to doom to the flames, as "wood, hay, and stubble," the multitude of sermons, dialogues, essays, disquisitions, pamphlets, and volumes, they have devoted to this subject, and perhaps fondly regarded as the choicest "gold, silver, and precious stones" among their works.

But we are aware likewise, that it is the part of their Christian meekness and humility to weigh with attention every dispassionate examination of their views; and the part of their enlightened zeal to seek and embrace the truth, however much at variance it may be with the opinions they have heretofore held; and the part of their love to the Redeemer, to shrink from no sacrifices involved in abandoning errors injurious to Him and

His cause, and in gaining just views of His character and will. And we repose on their intelligence and piety the hope, that the views we have exhibited, however subversive of those they have been accustomed to entertain, will commend themselves to their consciences in the sight of God, as the truth, and command from them an unreluctant acceptance.

We conjure them not to scorn our reasonings, nor disregard them, till they shall be able with the weapons of indubitable truth to refute them; and we conjure them by all the regard that should be cherished for the truth as it is in Jesus; and by all the injuries which it may inflict on the cause of God, virtually to deny His attributes and misrepresent His government; and by the fears of being found to have turned from the simplicity of the Gospel, and taught for doctrines the commandments of men; henceforth to chain the hand of sacrilege, with which this subject has been assailed, and restrict their speculations and belief within the limits of truth and soberness. We recommend them, as brethren, to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build them up, and to give them an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

THE END.











